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E. C. Rutherford
Jan 1894

THE

Second Coming

OF OUR LORD.

CANCELLED

BEING PAPERS READ AT A

Conference Held at Niagara, Ont.

JULY 14TH TO 17TH, 1885.

TORONTO, CANADA:

S. R. BRIGGS,

TORONTO WILLARD TRACT DEPOSITORY.

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CONFERENCE COMMITTEE.

At a meeting held at the residence of REV. H. M. PARSONS, Toronto, April 6th to consider a proposal of a Conference, by the friends who believe the "Coming of the Lord" to be imminent, it was resolved to invite such a Conference to meet at Niagara, Ont., in July, and the following Committee was appointed to perfect the arrangements for this purpose.

MR. W. H. HOWLAND, Chairman.

MR. S. R. BRIGGS, Treasurer.

MR. ALF. SANDHAM, Secretary.

REV. J. DENOVAN.

" T. C. DESBARRES

" H. M. PARSONS.

" J. ALEXANDER.

" S. J. HUNTER.

" JOHN MUTCH.

" JOHN SALMON.

" WM. FRIZZELL.

" ROBT. RODGERS.

" WALTER AMOS.

" W. HENRY BARNES.

HON. S. H. BLAKE.

DR. J. ROBINSON.

JUDGE MACDONALD.

MR. WM. M. CLARK.

" ROBERT KILGOUR.

" H. B. GORDON.

" J. L. BLAIKIE.

" F. FENTON.

" J. J. GARTSHORE.

" HENRY O'BRIEN.

" W. A. PARLANE.

" E. J. REYNOLDS.

" ELIAS ROGERS.

The Committee, after several sessions, decided upon inviting the Brethren whose papers form this volume to take part in the proposed Conference, to be held in the Pavilion erected by the proprietors of the Queen's Royal Hotel, on the site of the Tent, in which the Believers' meeting was held in 1883.

PREFACE.

A BEAUTIFUL pavilion has recently been erected by the Queen's Royal Hotel Company, on Conference Hill, Niagara, overlooking the broad river of that name and lake Toronto. On this lovely and restful spot a considerable company of believers gathered July 14, 1885, to study the Sacred Scriptures with regard to the "Second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The meeting was called, as will be seen on the preceding page, by a number of well known ministers of the Gospel, and prominent gentlemen connected with His church, irrespective of denominational differences; and they discovered, as so many have found in a happy experience, the power of "that blessed hope" to unite the hearts of Christians in delightful fellowship, and in the fervor of increased love for a common Saviour.

The first hour was devoted to praise and prayer. The passage of God's Holy Word selected for the opening service was Acts i. 1-14; and it includes and sets forth the great truths which brought the Conference together. First, it presents to us a risen Christ, manifesting Himself to be alive after His passion by many infallible proofs, as He was seen by His disciples through forty days, while He spoke to them of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God. Second, the restoration of the Kingdom to Israel is distinctly implied, as He did not rebuke the Jewish expectations of His followers, but only their curiosity to know the times or seasons. Third, He informs them that during the period intervening before the restoration of the Kingdom to Israel, they will receive the power of the Holy Ghost coming upon them. Fourth, this power is to be wielded in witnessing, not concerning themselves, nor the Church, nor human progress, but unto Him. Fifth, having so spoken, a cloud received Him out of their sight, and he took His way to the right hand of the Majesty on high. Sixth, the same Jesus shall so come in like manner as he was seen to go into heaven, bodily, literally, visibly, and to the Mount of Olives. Seventh, immediately afterwards the apostles, together with the women, all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication.

The papers that follow must speak for themselves; and it is earnestly hoped that they will at least be read with unprejudiced minds by many of God's dear children, who desire to know something of a doctrine which shines on almost every page of the New Testament, and occupies so large a part of the Old. It is also asked of those who know the truth, that they will implore the blessing of God to accompany the circulation of this little book to the praise of our coming Lord.

J. H. BROOKES.



“HISTORY
OF THE
DOCTRINE OF PRE-MILLENNIALISM.”

BY

REV. JOHN MUTCH, M.A., TORONTO.

THE subject, as you will see from the programme, allotted to me by the committee of arrangement for this convention, is the “History of the Doctrine of Pre-millennialism. It will be necessary at the very outset to give a statement of what Pre-Millennialists believe—what is the doctrine? I am well aware that Christian Chiliaists are not agreed as to detail. We differ on minor points. Our opponents have not been slow to take an unfair advantage of this difference and to argue from that, *it*, the doctrine cannot be true. This is a position not only unfair but one altogether untenable. Take for example the system of Calvinism, would the disciples of that school ever dream of admitting, that they are in error in their great fundamental doctrines because all are not agreed as to details and because they are by no means prepared to give assent to all the de-

ductions deduced from that system by some of its advocates? I think not. And as in this case so would it be in every other school of Christian doctrine. Take another example, viz., the Inspiration of Scripture. All Christians believe that the Bible is inspired of God, that holy men of God spake as moved by the Holy Ghost; yet it is a noted fact, that we differ as to the exact nature of Inspiration. Will any say because there is such a difference, therefore, there is no such thing as Inspiration? I think not. And just as it would be unfair and illogical in these cases so is it with those who are constantly using the fact of difference among Premillennialists as an argument against the doctrine itself.

But the statement of doctrine we are about to make and the history we are to give are not of detail but simply of the *fundamentals*—of those tenets—a man *must* hold in order to have any place among Pre-millennarians.

(1.) We believe that the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, which will be *real* and *personal* will be *before* the Millennium; and that this will be the great event which will wind up the present dispensation.

(2.) We believe in what is called a *first* and *literal* resurrection of the dead in Christ, which will take place at the *beginning* of the Millennial age, *i.e.* when Christ comes; and that the rest of the dead will not live again until the end of 1000 years.

This much is *essential* to Pre-Millennialism, a man must believe this much in order to be classed with Christian Chiliasts.

I would have you observe that in this statement of

doctrine, we do not speak of the visible and external *sovereignty* of Christ on the earth, of a kingdom of outward glory, established upon the ruin of earthly kingdoms, we do not say here whether the seat of the Millennial glory will be in heaven or on the earth.

In discussion with a Post-Millennialist I would not argue whether the Jews will be restored to Palestine or not, I would not argue whether Christ shall remain upon the earth or not, nor would I discuss the practical application of the doctrine of Pre-Millennialism; but would confine the discussion to the two points mentioned above, viz.: (1.) The *personal* return of Christ to the earth *before* the Millennium; and (2.) The *First* Resurrection. Establish these two points and Pre-Millennialists are fundamentally correct. It is in this wide sense that I will trace the history of the doctrine. In a paper like this, which deals simply with the history of the opinion, it is not the place to show this to be the view taught by the *prophets* and the *apostles*, for were that established then the question to all believing in the Inspiration of the Scriptures, would be settled beyond controversy. What we want to know is the mind of the sacred writers. Are Pre-Millennialists or Post-Millennialists right in their *interpretation* of the Bible. In this paper all we strive after is to learn the consensus of opinion on this matter. What has the Church in all ages held on this question? Has Pre-Millennialism found its supporters only among those who are fanciful, fanatical, unthoughtful, as has been often said, or has it found its disciples among the most learned, pious, and devoted members of the Church of Christ. This is what we propose to examine.

8 "History of the Doctrine of Pre-Millennialism."

I. WE WILL ENQUIRE WHAT WAS THE OPINION OF THE
EARLY FATHERS AND APOLOGISTS.

The early church was eminently Pre-Millennial, in expectation of our Lord's advent. His coming and kingdom was her constant hope and "she deemed it," says Massillon, "one step in apostacy not to sigh for His return." With her too Millennialism was connected with all that was orthodox.

(1.) Let us look at the position taken by some of the apostolic fathers, *i.e.* of men who are supposed to have seen and conversed with one or more of the apostles.

Clement Romanus. He is supposed to be the Clement referred to by the Apostle Paul in Phil. 4: 3, where he is spoken of as having his name in the book of life. He was third bishop of Rome and fellow labourer with the Apostle. There is a vast amount of literature falsely ascribed to his pen, such as the Clementine Homilies. There is however an epistle of his to the Corinthian Church of considerable length and of great merit, acknowledged by all to be genuine. This Epistle and part of a second, to the same church, attributed to him are found appendant to the Alexandrine MSS., of the scriptures. Now in this first epistle of his he says, "Let us be followers of those who went about in goat skins and sheep skins preaching the coming of Christ." Again, alluding to some who scoff at the apparent delay of the advent, he says, "You see how in a little while the fruit of the tree comes to maturity. Of a truth, yet a little while and His will shall be accomplished suddenly, the Holy Scriptures itself bearing witness that he shall come quickly and not tarry; and the Lord shall suddenly come to his temple even the Holy one, whom ye look for."

In his second Epistle, he says, "let us every hour expect the kingdom of God in love and righteousness because we know not the day of God's appearing, &c." Such is the testimony of one who was undoubtedly a companion of the Apostle Paul.

Barnabas, who is supposed, by some to be the companion of Paul mentioned in the Acts, taught in the epistle generally attributed to his pen, that the Sabbath rest will come when the Son of God shall appear to destroy the lawless one. The true Sabbath is the Sabbath of one thousand years. Then all will be sanctified completely, that is, when Christ comes back to reign. "If these words mean anything" says one, "they surely teach a kingdom of the resurrection on this earth introduced by the Second Advent."

Polycarp, a Presbyter of the Church of Smyrna, is said to have been a disciple of the apostle John with whom he claims to have had familiar intercourse. He served Christ eighty-six years, and suffered martyrdom about 166 A.D. Irenaeus mentions that he was taught the Christian doctrine by the Apostle John and that he took part in his ordination. Eusebius bears the highest testimony concerning him and makes him a pattern of orthodoxy. The Epistle attributed to him is both authentic and genuine. He taught in this Epistle that God had raised up our Lord Jesus from the dead, and that he will come to judge the world and raise the saints; and that if we walk worthy of him we shall reign together with him. "If we obey Christ and please him in this age we shall receive the age to come. He will raise us from the dead and we shall live and reign with him."

10 " *History of the Doctrine of Pre-Millennialism.*"

There is every reason to believe that *Hermas* and *Ignatius* held the same view. The apostolic fathers, then, were Pre-Millennialists. And surely it is a fact of no mean significance that the very men who lived next the apostles, who often communed, labored and suffered with them, should in the scanty materials that survive have left so much that bears testimony to this doctrine.

2. Next we will consider the position taken in regard to this doctrine by the early apologists. We will find that, wherever they have spoken on the subject prior to the time of Constantine's victory, they are at one in favour of Pre-millennialism, with the exception of Origen and his transcendental school.

Justin Martyr, born towards the close of the first century or at the beginning of second, has written some of the best apologies of the early centuries. He was renowned in learning, being well versed in the philosophy and literature of his age. Eusebius says his works stood in high repute among the early Christians. He speaks of those as "destitute of just reason" who did not understand that which is clear from all the Scriptures, that two comings of Christ are announced. When questioned by Trypho the Jew in regard to this question he answered, "I am not such a wretch, Trypho, to say one thing and mean another. I have before confessed to thee that I and many others are of this opinion (the millennial) so that we hold it to be thoroughly proved that it will come to pass. But I have also signified unto thee on the other hand that many, even those of that race of Christians who follow not godly and pure doctrine, do not acknowledge it. For I have demonstrated to thee that these are indeed called Christians, but are atheists and impious

heretics, because that in all things they teach what is blasphemous, ungodly, and unsound." In another paragraph he goes on to say "I, and whatsoever Christians are orthodox in all things, do know, that there will be a resurrection of the flesh, and a thousand years in the city of Jerusalem, built, adorned, and enlarged according to the prophets." Such is the testimony of one to whose learning and piety, nearly all the succeeding fathers bear witness. From his writings we learn that not only he himself was a Pre-millennialist ; but that it was the orthodox view of his time.

Melito, the eloquent and pious Bishop of Sardis, and contemporary of Justin Martyr, held the same view.

Irenaeus, Bishop of Lyons, who was among the most renowned of the early fathers, flourished as a writer about 180 A.D. His works now extant, and which Mosheim calls "a splendid monument of antiquity," are five books on the Heresies of his times. In these books he contends that Abraham and his seed have not yet realized the promises made to them concerning the promised land, and that they will not do so until the millennial age. He says that "Christ is the stone cut out without hands, who shall destroy temporal kingdoms, and introduce an eternal one which is the resurrection of the just. When Antichrist shall have devastated all things in this world, he will reign for three and one half years, and sit in the temple of Jerusalem ; and then the Lord will come from heaven in the clouds, in the glory of the Father, sending this man to the lake of fire, but bringing in for the righteous, the times of the kingdom, the rest, the hallowed seventh day, and restoring to Abraham the promised inheritance." In

another place he contends that Jerusalem will be re-built after the pattern of the 'Jerusalem which is the mother of us all. Such is the testimony of Irenaeus.

I would add here in one sentence, that, among the remaining Greek fathers, *Clemens Alexandrinus* and *Hippolytus* undoubtedly held pre-millennarian views.

Hippolytus

Opposition in the Greek Church,

The first opponent of any note in the early Greek church, to Christian Chiliasm was *Origen*. He was born at Alexandria about 184 A.D., and was without doubt a man of great ability. He gave himself to the study of the Platonic Philosophy, and undoubtedly this had much to do with his fanciful interpretations of Scripture.

I would remind those who use his opinion as an argument against this doctrine, that he was declared a heretic by a General Council at Constantinople; and that there were good grounds for this decision appears from the following doctrines which he is said to have taught:—

- (1) He believed in the eternity of matter.
- (2) He held the pre-existence of human souls in a higher and better state, and that they were confined in these present bodies because of sin committed in the pre-existent state.
- (3) He denied the assumption by Christ of a true human body as well as of a true human soul.
- (4) He denied the vicarious efficacy of the sufferings of Christ.
- (5) He held the principles of Pelagianism.
- (6) He expressed doubts respecting the omnipotence and omniscience of God.

To my mind a man who was in error on so many im-

portant and fundamental doctrines would, in all probability, be astray in his eschatological views—at least much weight should not be attached to his opinions.

His allegorical mode of interpreting Scripture opened a secure retreat for all kinds of error. Mosheim calls his system "wild, fanciful, chimerical, mystical, licentious."

Dr. Adam Clark writes, "every friend of rational piety and genuine Christianity, must lament that a man of so much learning and unaffected godliness should have been led to countenance, much less recommend such a plan of Scripture interpretation, in many respects the most futile, absurd and dangerous that could be conceived." This remained a great evil in the church, which was not remedied until the time of Luther and Melancthon. Now it was through the influence of such a man and such a mode of interpretation that the decline of the Pre-millennial faith began, and Post-millennialism had its origin.

Before leaving the fathers and apologists, I cannot but call your attention to the opinion held on this subject by *Tertullian*, the first of the Latin fathers, whose writings are extant. Dr. Philip Schaff says, "He was the first great writer of Latin Christianity, and one of the grandest and most original characters of the ancient church; that while he was thoroughly conversant with Greek theology, yet he was entirely independent of it. He was the head of the school of theology in the Western Church. Now, this great and good man was pre-eminently a Pre-millennialist. He wrote a book in its defence. He says, "We confess that a kingdom is promised us on earth before that in heaven, but in another state—namely, after the resurrection; for it will

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be one thousand years in a city of divine workmanship, viz., Jerusalem brought down from heaven. This is the city provided of God to receive the saints in the resurrection, wherein to refresh them with an abundance of all spiritual good things." Then he goes on to say that it is both right and worthy of God that His servants should triumph and rejoice in the place they have been afflicted for His name's sake. This, I am sure, will suffice to show that he was sound on this doctrine.

Lactantius, the Christian Cicero, the most eloquent of the Latin fathers, and *Cyprian*, the disciple and admirer of Tertullian, held the same faith. In short, such is the testimony furnished by all the fathers and apologists, save Origen and his school.

A host of learned men, such as Dorner, Elliott, Mede, Gibbon, Chillingworth, declare this to be the voice of the early church. Giessler, a most accurate historian, says, "In all the writings of these centuries, Chiliasm is so distinctly and predominantly mentioned, that we cannot hesitate in regarding it as the general belief of that age." Alford, in his exegesis of vs. 1-6 of Rev. 20, says, "The whole church, for 300 years, understood these verses in a plain literal sense," and "that it is the most cogent instance of unanimity which primitive antiquity presents." Nathaniel West says, "The truth is, this precious hope was a gift to the martyrs from one who was their brother and companion in tribulation and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, the consolation of the martyr church, which held it fast in life and death."

II. WE NOW PASS TO THE 4TH AND THE 5TH CENTURIES.

In this century we have the first Council of Nice,

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called by Constantine to deal especially with the Arian heresy. From two hundred and fifty to three hundred and twenty bishops were present. They framed what is called the Nicene Creed. There does not appear to me to be any thing very decided in this creed on the point under discussion, and yet there is enough to show that the Pre-millenarian faith, after fifty years of strong opposition, still was the belief of a majority of this Council. But we cannot help admitting that this doctrine began to lose hold upon the mind of the Church. It was opposed by such men as *Eusebius*, the first writer of ecclesiastical history, by *Cyril* bishop of Jerusalem, by *Jerome* the most scholarly and erudite among the Fathers of the Latin Church who was a most bitter, and shall I say, unscrupulous opponent of the Millennium. All Millennial historians represent him as harsh and unfair. Luther says of this man, "I know of no teacher to whom I am so hostile as to Jerome for he writes only of fastings, meats, virginity, &c. If he only had insisted upon the works of faith and performed them. But he teaches nothing either about faith or love, or hope, or the works of faith." This doctrine was also opposed by the great and good *Augustine*, Bishop of Hippo, and contemporary with Jerome. He was born 358, A.D. died 434 A.D. He developed what is commonly known as the Augustinian view of the Millennium. The seventh day to him was the eternal Sabbath of rest. I think there is every reason to believe that what led both Jerome and Augustine to contend so strongly against the doctrine of Chiliasm was the abuse of it by its advocates, such abuses as that made of it by the Montanists. It was in the 4th and beginning of 5th centuries that certain anti-millenarian divines began to

throw doubt on the inspiration of the Apocalypse and denied it a place in the Canon. Let me give what Horatius Bonar says on this point. In speaking on 20th chap. of Rev. he says, " In the first centuries great stress was laid upon this passage. It was considered the stronghold of Chiliasm, so strong and decided was its testimony deemed, that the Anti-Chiliasts deemed their only escape was the total denial of the Apocalypse. Chiliasm and the Apocalypse were deemed inseparable. They could only get rid of the former by rejecting the latter. They never thought it possible to deny that the Apocalypse taught Chiliasm. This was not disputed; and hence those who disliked Chiliasm could not tolerate the Apocalypse. It was not until the Church had taken lessons in the school of Origen that they could condemn Chiliasm without disputing the inspiration of the Revelation."

This opposition to the Apocalypse did not cease until the question of Chiliasm had ceased to excite any special interest in the churches. Surely it is very significant and very pertinent to the question under discussion to know, that not a few learned and able divines found it necessary to reject a part of the Divine word in order to maintain with any degree of success their opposition to this doctrine.

III. WE WILL EXAMINE THE PLACE GIVEN TO THIS DOCTRINE IN THE CHURCH FROM THE END OF THE 5TH.

CENTURY TILL THE REFORMATION.

Now we come to the age of error, darkness and corruption in the Church, an age that lasts for about one thousand years. Learning in the 5th century began to decline, the

barbarians who overran the country at this time held letters in utter contempt and placed all glory in arms, and military courage. The study of the scriptures was almost completely neglected before the middle of the sixth century. Theology rapidly became mixed with mysticism, superstition and error. Religion now consists in ceremonies and rites. Conversion is little more than receiving the rite of baptism, assuming the name of Christian, and making some little change in the external form of their heathen worship in order to accommodate it to Christianity. Heathen temples were often changed into Christian Churches, and were purified and consecrated with holy water. The people were only required to worship images of Christ and of holy men, instead of those of their idol gods, and for the most part, with the same ceremonies. The religion of the heart seems scarcely to have been thought of. The church now seeks a temporal instead of a spiritual Kingdom. Now it was in this period when "the church became a worldly power, the hope of the future glory was weakened by the joy over present success: now it was that the church looking at its existing temporal prosperity as fulfilling the prophecies, ceased to look for Christ's promised reign on the earth." In the words of Auberlin (Dan. p. 375.) "Chiliasm disappeared in proportion as Roman Papal Catholicism advanced. The Papacy took to itself, as a robber, that glory which is an object of hope, and can only be reached by the obedience and humility of the Cross. When the church became a harlot she ceased to be a bride who goes to meet her bridegroom, and thus Chiliasm disappeared," or as another has well said, "The great chasm in the history of

Chiliasm seems to be those awful centuries of Rome's supremacy when almost every truth was hidden."

I would call your attention however to the fact that in this dark picture there is one bright spot. It is to be found in the history of the Waldensian Church, who while living at the very doors of the Romish Church and under the thunders of the Vatican, retained purity of worship and purity of life. Now this same Church, this church of the Martyrs, not only condemned the mystical or allegorical interpretation of Scripture, but retained this doctrine of pre-millennarianism. They never dreamt of a Millennial age before the coming of Christ, but they *did* believe that the second coming was imminent. They also used this doctrine as a reason why they should live consecrated lives. So we see that while this doctrine was lost to the great body of the visible Church, it was only in that part of it where true Christianity had ceased to live; while among the Waldensians, that part of the Church in which true godliness lived, we find that Chiliasm retained its hold on the hearts and minds of the people. I would give extracts from their treatise on "Anti-Christ and Noble Lesson" did time permit but let it suffice to say that we are proud to be able to trace the genealogy of this doctrine through this noble army of Martyrs to the Church of the apostolic age. That in this living Church we find a bridge by which Pre-millennialism is able to cross over the awful chasm made in the life of the Church by Romish superstition and error.

Before passing to the Reformation period I would refer almost in a single sentence, to the opinion of the "morning star" of that day, that was so soon to flood the

church with light and life—I mean Wickliffe. What he may have held about the personal reign of Christ on earth we can not well say, but this is certain that he expected no millennial glory, no one thousand years of universal peace, and conversion before Christ came "He must therefore have been a Pre-millennialist, and thus we see that as soon as truth in its purity begins to revive in the Church this doctrine is revived with it."

IV. FROM THE REFORMATION TO THE PRESENT TIME.

We have now come to the last great period of the Church's history, viz; from the Reformation to the present time.

1. *The Reformers*—During the first years of the Reformation, in the time of the great struggle between the Romish Church and the Reformers, little place was given to Eschatology; but as early as the first century after the Reformation this doctrine was held by not a few learned and godly men; and in the 2nd century it rose into still greater prominence being held by representative men in all parts of the Church. Dr. Brookes, says, "whilst the single tenet of the thousand years was by the generality of the early Reformers avoided; still they often avowed what in the present day would generally be considered decided Millennarian doctrine. They came back decidedly to that important point, looking for the speedy revelation in glory of the Lord Jesus Christ—a point of doctrine which we constantly find pressed upon the Church in the writings of the Apostles."

There can be no disputing this. The reformers did not expect a Millennium, a golden age, before the second coming of Christ. The great *Luther*, the learned and gentle *Melancthon*, *Calvin*, *Knex*, and many others deny

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the modern doctrine of the world's entire conversion before Christ comes. Many of them regarded the Pope as Anti-Christ and the end as near.

Tyndale, the celebrated English reformer says "The Apostles taught us to look for Christ's coming every hour."

Jno. Piscator, Prof. of Theology in Strasburg, who died 1546, in his valuable commentary says, "The advent of the Lord to judgment is to be looked for with perpetual vigilance."

Latimer expected it within 448 years, and *Ridley* who suffered at the stake with *Latimer* held that we should constantly be found looking for Christ.

The Augsburg Confession, which may well be regarded as the Creed of the German reformers, taught this. In the 17th Article we read "Our Churches condemn those who circulate the Judaizing notion, that prior to the resurrection of the dead the pious will establish a separate temporal government, and all the wicked be exterminated. The Catechism of Ed. VI. 1550, said by some to have been drawn up by *Cranmer*, taught the same. I think that this is sufficient to show that the Reformers held firmly that there would be no Millennium until Christ comes.

2. PRE-MILLENNIALISM IN 17TH CENTURY.

Pre-Millennialism rose to much prominence in this century. In a paper like this we can do little more than glance at the opinions advanced by a few of its advocates.

Foremost among these comes the illustrious *Joseph Mede*. He was a Fellow of Christ College at Cam-

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bridge, and eminent for learning and piety. He is best known by his "Clavis Apocalyptica," a work well-known to all prophetic students, and highly esteemed. He was considered a man almost inspired for the solution of the Apocalyptic mysteries. He held that these prophecies were predictive of progressive history, partly fulfilled and partly unfulfilled. In explanation of Rev. 20th he says, "The rising of the martyrs is that which is called the first resurrection." Then he goes on to say, "I admit the first resurrection to be corporeal, as well as the second, though I confess I have much striven against it, and if the text would admit another sense less free of paradox, I had yet rather listen unto it, but I find it not." Again, after saying that he could not explain the manner of these things, he adds, "Yet thus much I conceive the text seems to imply, that these saints of the first resurrection should reign here on the earth in the new Jerusalem, in a state of beatitude and glory, partaking of the Divine presence and vision of Christ their King, as it were in a heaven upon earth, a new paradise, immutable, unchangeable. This surely proves he was a Pre-Millennialist.

Passing over several names we next come to *Thomas Goodwin*. He was educated at the University of Cambridge, and was successively fellow, preacher, and vicar of Christ Church. He was afterwards one of the most eminent independent ministers of London. He was one of the Westminster Assembly. His learning was very great, his spiritual experience profound, his theology rigidly Calvinistic. Hear what he says, "Now it is said that the first resurrection is a spiritual resurrection of men's souls from the death of sin; but consider

with yourselves a little; first, it is the souls of men dead; that is plain for he saith they were slain with the sword, they were beheaded for the witness of Jesus; and as their death is, so must their resurrection be: their death was certainly a bodily death for they were beheaded, therefore their resurrection must be answerable to it. And to mention no other arguments they reigned with Christ a thousand years. This is not the glory of heaven, for that is for ever, besides the rest of the dead live not again till the thousand years are expired." Again he says, "Now where do these reign. It should seem on earth by this argument, because why else is the devil bound up. He need not be bound up for their reigning in heaven." Such is the voice of the great and pious Goodwin.

John Milton, the author of "Paradise Lost," and *Jeremy Taylor*, the learned Chaplain to King Charles I., both decidedly taught that there would be no millennium until Christ comes. *Baxter* and *Watson* looked for the coming of the Lord. The sainted Rutherford, a distinguished Scotch divine Covenanter, and one of the Commissioners to the Westminster Assembly, is believed to have held this doctrine, at least this much of it, that there would be no millennium until Christ comes.

John Bunyan, the "Immortal dreamer of Bedford Jail," lifted his voice against the error of Post-millennialism. On the millennium he writes as follows:—"God's blessing the Sabbath day and resting on it from all His works, was a type of that glorious rest that saints shall have when the six days of this world are fully ended. This the Apostle asserts in the fourth chapter to the Hebrews, 'There remaineth a rest (or the keep-

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ing of a Sabbath) to the people of God,' which Sabbath, as I conceive, will be the seventh thousand of years which are to follow immediately after the earth has stood six thousand first. For as God was six days in the work of creation, and rested on the seventh day, so in six thousand years He will perfect His work and providences that concern this world. As also He will finish the travail and toil of His saints, with the burden of the beasts, and the curse of the ground, and bring all into rest for a thousand years."

Peter Jurieu, a learned French Protestant Calvinist, who did great work for the Reformed Church, was decidedly a Pre-millennialist. He distinctly teaches that Christ shall come before the Millennium; that the dead in Christ shall be raised then, and that they shall reign with Christ on earth one thousand years.

We cannot leave this century without calling attention to the *Westminster Assembly*, which was in session 1643-52, a synod of Calvinistic and Puritan divines, which produced the doctrinal and disciplinary standards of the British and American Presbyterian Churches. This synod, says Dr. Schaff, occupies the first place of all synods held in the reformed churches, not excepting that of Doet. Now, of this Assembly, Robert Bailie, Principal of the University of Glasgow, who was for three years a member of this Assembly, and to whom we are indebted for a graphic description of it, writes from the Assembly to a friend in Scotland, bemoaning the predominant Chiliasm of its greatest members. "Most of the chief divines here," he murmured, "not only independents, but others, as Twisse, Marshall Palmer, and many others, are expressed Chiliasts." Masson, in his life

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of Milton, repeats the statement, and Principal Cunningham, of Scotland, has affirmed, "That they who entertained it were among the soundest of the Westminster divines."

The same might be said of the Baptist Assembly of 1660. We pass now to 18th Century.

18TH CENTURY.

This century is distinguished for the rise of a New Millennial theory, viz., the Whitbyan. Whitby taught that the true millennium is not a reign of persons raised from the dead, but of the church flourishing gloriously for a thousand years, after the conversion of the Jews, and the flowing in of all nations to them thus converted to the Christian faith. At first this theory met with considerable acceptance. Learned and earnest men adopted it. However it was discovered to be no new "Hypothesis" but a theory exploded long before Whitby was born. In this Century, the doctrine of the personal reign found advocates not only among the great lights in the church, but it also enlisted astronomers, philosophers, nobles and poets in its defence. We will briefly consider a few representative names.

Sir Isaac Newton, the great Philosopher looked for a kingdom of millennial glory.

Dr. John Gill, an eminent theologian and orientalist, says, "that Christ will have a special, peculiar, glorious, and visible kingdom in which He will reign personally on the earth. He says further, "This kingdom of Christ will be bounded by two resurrections, by the first resurrection, or resurrection of the just at which it will begin, and by the second resurrection or the resurrection of the wicked at which it will end."

Jno. Albert Bengel, to whom Bible Students owe so much, who gave the starting point for the whole modern text criticism of the New Testament, and whose exegetical work remains unto this day a treasure-house of exposition, taught this doctrine. He held that there would be a falling away in this age, *i.e.* before the millennium, that Christ would come before the millennial glory.

John Wesley, the founder of Methodism taught much the same as Bengel.

Thomas Newton, Bishop of Bristol, distinguished for his piety and learning, taught that there would be a first and literal resurrection—which would take place immediately before the Millennium.

Robert Hall, the great Baptist preacher of his time is said to have regretted on his death bed that he had not preached the Millennarian views he entertained.

Augustus Toplady, a distinguished Calvinistic divine, was eminently a Pre-millennialist. He says, "I am one of those old fashioned people who believe the doctrine of the Millennium, and that there will be two distinct resurrections of the dead, first of the just, and second of the unjust, which last resurrection of the reprobate will not commence till a thousand years after the resurrection of the elect. In this glorious interval of one thousand years, Christ I apprehend, will reign in person over the kingdom of the just.

19TH CENTURY.

In the words of another "It is simply impossible to catalogue all the names in the present century that cluster around the doctrine to give it support. We will mention but a few. Among English speaking Protestants we

have Chalmers, Irving, Candlish, Begg, Jamieson, Faussett, Van Doren, Duffield, Horne, Ryle, Elliott, Ellicott, Alford, Tregelles and a host of others. In the German Church we have such names as Stier, Delitzsch. Stockmeyer, Lange, Olshausen, Van Oosterzee, DeWitte, Christlieb and Meyer. I need not speak to you of the learning, piety, reputation of these men. We know them to be men who stand in the first ranks of the church in learning, in piety, in power. To be the best preachers, the most able writers the church has ever had, men whose works are found in every theological library and whose opinion is sought on every religious question. Surely such names as these should for ever rescue the doctrine from the charge that is often made against it, viz., that it finds its supporters alone among the fanatical and merely emotional members of the Christian Church. It does seem to me that the history of the doctrine proves beyond controversy that the man who is guilty of making such a charge is either dishonest, or profoundly ignorant of the subject of which he is treating.

The following are extracts from a few of the above mentioned:—

In the Critical Commentary of Jamieson, Fausset and Brown we find such words as these. "Christ's second coming is not a mere point of time but a *Period*, beginning with the resurrection of the just and ending with the general judgment. Again the Millennial reign on the earth does not rest on an isolated passage, but all Old Testament prophecy goes upon the same view. The First Resurrection is the resurrection of the just."

Next, a few lines from the Christian Dogmatics of

Van Oosterzee, the Dutch theologian, who died three years ago this month. He was the recognized leader of the Evangelical School of Holland. In learning, eloquence, and piety he ranked with the greatest divines of his day. His writings are now taking a prominent place in the Church.. Speaking of this doctrine he says, "For us also this hope is a real pearl of Christian truth." Then he goes on to say "The fulfilment of the prophetic word can not lead to its entire annulling, and when we enquire as to the indestructible reality which underlies alike the prospect of prophets and apostles we believe that this prospect authorizes us to hope for nothing less than a glorious manifestation of the triumphant Kingdom of God on earth, even before the entire running out of the course of the world's history. Such a manifestation we may not expect before the return of the Lord, but after this return we regard it—even apart from the letter of Scripture—as on internal grounds, and, moreover, as in the highest degree worthy of God."

My last extract is from Dean Alford, to whom Bible students owe so much, and who requires no introduction to an audience like this.

In his exposition of the 4th and 5th verses 20th chap. of Rev. he says. "I cannot consent to distort these words from their plain sense and chronological place in the prophecy, on account of any considerations of difficulty or any risk of abuses which the doctrines of the millennium may bring with it. Those who lived next to the Apostles and the whole church for 300 years understood them in the plain and literal sense; and it is a strange sight in these days to see expositors who are among the first, in reverence of antiquity, complacently

casting aside the most cogent instance of unanimity which primitive antiquity presents. As regards the text itself no legitimate treatment of it will extort what is known as the spiritual interpretation now in fashion. If in a passage where two resurrections, are mentioned where certain souls lived at first and the rest of the dead lived only at the end of a specified period after that first, if, in any such a passage, the first resurrection may be understood to mean spiritual rising with Christ, while the second means literal rising from the grave; then there is an end of all significance in language, and Scripture is wiped out as a definite testimony to anything. If the first resurrection is spiritual then so is the second, which we suppose, none will be hardy enough to maintain. But if the second is literal, then so is the first, which in common with the whole primitive church, and many of the best modern expositors, I do maintain and received as an article of faith and hope.

In conclusion I would say we have learned two things,

First. That the Church held this doctrine in the days of apostolic purity; forgot it in the times of darkness and Roman supremacy, when she was seeking a temporal and not a spiritual kingdom; only to have it revived as soon as the reformation dawned; and that ever since that time she has grown stronger in her faith in this doctrine, as she has increased in the knowledge of the truth.

Second. That this doctrine has been supported by the best preachers, the most learned professors, the most able writers of the Church, in all ages. Our conclusion therefore is that the historical argument is most emphatically in favour of the truth of the doctrine.

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The Coming of Christ:

PERSONAL AND PRE-MILLENNIAL.

BY

REV. J. H. BROOKES, D.D.

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THE COMING OF CHRIST: **PERSONAL AND PRE-MILLENNIAL**

BY

REV. J. H. BROOKES, D.D.

Tuesday afternoon, July 14th, 1885.

EVEN a careless reader of the New Testament cannot fail to notice how frequently our Lord Jesus Christ and the Apostles refer to His second coming. Nor can there be a doubt that the first impression produced by these references would lead to the belief that His coming is personal. That is to say, if the reader had never been told by a preacher or expositor that the language is figurative, it could never occur to him that the words mean more or less than our Lord's real return to earth.

For example, he finds that in Matthew's gospel Jesus says, "The Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father, with his angels, and then shall he reward every man according to his works". Or he finds in Mark's gospel, "whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me, and of my words, in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father, with the holy angels". Or he finds in Luke's gospel, "Be ye therefore ready also: for

the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not". Or he finds in John's gospel "If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself". It requires scholarship and ecclesiastical authority to explain away the natural and obvious import of these and kindred statements, and to put upon them a figurative and symbolical meaning.

Through human teaching, as distinguished from Divine testimony, the last quoted text has been robbed of its power and sweetness in the minds of a vast majority of Christians, who imagine that it tells them of their death. But Dr. David Brown, whose post-millennial book on the Second Advent his admirers claimed to be unanswerable, after citing the words, "if I go away," adds "what then? Ye shall soon follow me? Death shall shortly bring us together? Nay; but 'If I go away, *I will come again, and receive you unto myself*; that where I am, there ye may be also.' 'And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall—what? Take you home soon to himself at death? Nay, but shall 'so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.' (Acts i. 10, 11.) And how know we that, by jostling this event out of its scriptural place in the expectations of the Church, we are not, in a great degree, destroying its character and power as a practical principle? Can we not believe, though unable to trace it, that God's methods are ever best; and that in nature, so perhaps in revelation, a modification by us of the divine arrangements, appar-

ently slight, and attended even with some seeming advantages, may be followed by a total and unexpected change of results, the opposite of what is anticipated and desired? So we fear it to be here."

"The coming of Christ to individuals at death," he proceeds to say, "however warrantably we may speak so, and whatever profitable considerations it may suggest, is not fitted for taking that place in the view of the believer which Scripture assigns to the second advent. This is a proposition of equal interest and importance. It would bear to be established and illustrated in detail. A hint or two, however, may suffice. 1. The death of believers, however changed in its character, in virtue of their union to Christ, is, intrinsically considered, not joyous, but grievous—not attractive, but repulsive. It is the disruption of a tie which the Creator formed for perpetuity—the unnatural and abhorrent divorce of parties made for sweet and uninterrupted fellowship.... But the Redeemer's second appearing is, to the believer, an event of unmingled joyousness, whether as respects the honor of his Lord, which will be then majestically vindicated before the world which had set it at nought, or as respects his own salvation, which will then have its glorious completion. How then, should the former event be fitted to awaken feelings, I say not equally intense, but even of the same order, as the latter?.... 2. The bliss of the disembodied spirits of the just is not only *incomplete*, but, in some sense, *private* and *fragmentary*, if I may so express myself.... But at the Redeemer's appearing, all his redeemed will be collected together and PERFECTLY, PUBLICLY, and SIMULTANEOUSLY glorified. Is it neces-

sary to point out the inferiority, in practical power, of the one prospect to the other, or to indicate the superior class of ideas and feelings which the latter is fitted to generate? 3. To put the expectation of one's own death in place of the prospect of Christ's appearing, is to dislocate a beautiful jointing in divine truth—to destroy one of its finest collocations:" and he goes on to show that the two literal, personal comings of Christ "are the two pivots on which turns the Christian life, the two wings on which believers mount up as eagles. If either is clipped, the soul's flight heavenward is low, feeble, and fitful. This is no casual collocation of truths. It is a studied, and, with the apostle, a favorite juxtaposition of the two greatest events in the Christian redemption, the first and the last, bearing an intrinsic relation in their respective objects."

It may be well in this connection to quote two or three other prominent post-millennial expositors concerning the personality of our Lord's second coming. Dr. Charles Hodge says on the words, "waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Cor. i. 7, "The second advent of Christ, so clearly predicted by himself and by his apostles, connected as it is with the promise of the resurrection of his people and the consummation of his kingdom, was the object of longing expectation *to all the early Christians*. So great is the glory connected with that event that Paul, in Rom. viii. 18-23, not only represents all present afflictions as trifling in comparison, but describes the whole creation as looking forward to it with earnest expectation. Comp. Phil. iii. 20; Tit. ii. 13. So general was this expectation that Christians were characterized as those

who love his appearing. 2 Tim. iv. 8, and as those who look for him, Heb. ix. 28. . . . If the second coming of Christ is to Christians of the present day less an object of desire than it was to their brethren during the apostolic age, it must be because they think the Lord is slack concerning his promise, and forget that with him a thousand years is as one day." May there not be another reason for the difference between the faith of the early Christians and the unbelief of modern Christendom, and may not that reason be discovered in the false teaching, which has allegorized and spiritualized away the plain meaning of the testimony given by our Lord and His apostles with regard to His second advent, and thus turned the thoughts of believers from "that blessed hope, the glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ", to the world's progress, and to adulterous and fatal alliance with the world?

Albert Barnes says on 1 Thes. i. 10, "wait for his Son from heaven," Christians "lived *as if* they were '*waiting*' for his return. They fully believed in it; they expected it. They were looking out for it, not knowing when it might occur, and *as if* it might occur at any moment. They were dead to the world, and were animated with an earnest desire to do good. This is one of the instances which demonstrate that the doctrine that the Lord Jesus will return to our world, is fitted, when understood in the true sense revealed in the Scriptures, to exert a powerful influence on the souls of men. It is eminently adapted to comfort the hearts of true Christians in the sorrows, bereavements, and sicknesses of life (John xiv. 1-3; Acts i. 11; 1 Thess. iv. 13-18; 2 Pet. iii. 8, 9); to lead us to watchfulness and to an earnest inquiry into the question

whether we are prepared to meet him (Matt. xxiv. 37-44 ; xxv. 13), to make us dead to the world, and to lead us to act as becomes the children of light (1 Thess. v. 5-9) ; to awaken and arouse impenitent and careless sinners (1 Thess. v. 2, 3 ; 2 Pet. iii. 3-7), and to excite Christians to self-denying efforts to spread the gospel in distant lands, as was the case at Thessalonica. Every doctrine of the gospel is adapted to produce some happy practical effects on mankind, but there are few that are more full of elevated and holy influences than that which teaches that the Lord Jesus will return to the earth, and which leads the soul to wait for his appearing". Mr. Barnes might be called the "As if" commentator, so frequently do these little words, italicised, appear in his writings ; but it is something to have him pluck up by the roots the oft-repeated objection to the personal and pre-millennial advent of our Lord, that it cuts the nerve of the missionary effort, as he candidly admits that it excites Christians to self-denying efforts to spread the gospel in distant lands, as was the case at Thessalonica.

Prof. Hackett, an able Baptist expositor, says on Acts iii. 20, "Nearly all critics understand this passage as referring to the return of Christ at the end of the world. The similarity of the language to that of other passages which announce that event demands this interpretation. The apostle enforces his exhortation to repent by an appeal to the final coming of Christ, not because he would represent it as near in point of time, but because that event was always near to the feelings and consciousness of the first believers. It was the great consummation on which the strongest desires of their souls were fixed, to which their thoughts and hopes were habitually

turned. They lived in expectation of it; they labored to be prepared for it; they were constantly, in the expressive language of Peter, *looking for and hastening unto it*. The apostles, the first Christians in general, comprehended the grandeur of that occasion, it filled their circle of view, stood forth to their contemplations as the point of culminating interest in their own and the world's history, threw into comparative insignificance the present time, death, all intermediate events, and made them feel that the manifestation of Christ, with its consequences of indescribable moment to all true believers, was the grand object which they were to keep in view as the end of all their toils, the commencement and perfection of their glorious immortality....If modern Christians sympathized more fully with the sacred writers on this subject, it would bring both their conduct and their style of religious instruction into nearer correspondence with the lives and teaching of the primitive examples of our faith."

Similar testimony from Post-Millennial writers could be multiplied indefinitely; but it would be needless to quote further, as no doubt every expositor who has sufficient intelligence to entitle his opinions to the least consideration will agree with the remark of Calvin on 1 Pet. iv. 7; "Moreover, it must be laid down as a first principle, that ever since the appearing of Christ, there is nothing left to the faithful, but with wakeful hearts to be always intent on His second Advent." But it is astonishing and pitiable to see how many teachers in the church explain away every text, upon which they can possibly lay their ruthless grasp, that alludes to His personal return. They admit that there are some pas-

sages in the word of God, which distinctly set forth His personal advent to judge the world, but most of them they assert are to be viewed figuratively or spiritually; and in their judgment refer to death, or the destruction of Jerusalem, or the manifestation of the Spirit, or any providential event whatever. As one of the most distinguished scholars of America has stated it, "there are a great many comings of Christ; all, however, pointing to His final and personal coming."

It would be a great relief to multitudes of humble believers, if these highly esteemed but strangely mistaken brethren would be kind enough to give us some criterion to enable us to distinguish between the figurative and the literal, between the spiritual and the personal, between the symbolical and the real. In one of the papers read before the Prophetic Conference in New York a few years ago, one hundred texts were cited from the New Testament, as teaching our Lord's second coming. To this three or four prominent preachers and professors with refreshing coolness replied that scarcely any of the texts quoted refer to His personal coming, whereas in truth every one of them refers to it, and to nothing else. All the texts look alike, all speak the same language, all at first glance seem to bear directly upon His real return; and it becomes those who deny this to point out the passages which declare Christ's second advent, and the passages which mean death, or the work of the Spirit, or war, or any other calamity or occurrence.

For example, we open the first epistles Paul was inspired to write, and we find believers described as having "turned to God from idols, to serve the living and

true God ; and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come" (1 Thess. i. 10). Here of course it is His personal advent that is declared, for He is described as God's Son, as God's Son from heaven, as raised from the dead, as Jesus, as having delivered us from the wrath to come. It is admitted, therefore, that it was for His personal return from heaven, the Thessalonians were taught by the Holy Ghost to wait, more than eighteen hundred years ago.

So in the next chapter the coming is obviously and confessedly personal, when the apostle says, "What is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?" The moment the attempt is made to substitute for His literal coming death, the destruction of Jerusalem, the manifestation of the Spirit, or any other thought than that expressed in the passage, its absurdity becomes at once apparent, and must be abandoned.

So in the next chapter the inspired writer prays, "The Lord make you to abound in love one towards another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you : to the end he may establish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with a'l his saints." It will not be denied that this can refer only to His personal coming, for it is a coming with all His saints, and this will not be until His personal return to earth.

So in the next chapter he says, "If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in (or through) Jesus, will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which

are alive, and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not precede them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord." No one will be bold enough to think that any but a personal coming is taught in these precious words. Not death, not the destruction of Jerusalem, not the Holy Spirit, nor any other person nor event, but the Lord *Himself* shall descend from heaven with a shout; and all who sleep through Him, and all His believing people who are living upon earth, shall be caught up in clouds to meet Him in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. The most ignorant post-millennialist will cheerfully admit that here we have the personal coming of Christ set before us as our blessed and comforting hope.

So in the next chapter we read as follows: "But of the times and seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly [evidently because the apostle had felt it incumbent on him to teach them about this great subject during his short stay among them] that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when *they* shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and *they* shall not escape. But *ye*, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake *you* as a thief. . . . And I pray God, your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." Here

again it will not be disputed that the allusion is to the real and personal advent of our Lord.

So in the first chapter of the Second epistle he writes, "To you who are troubled, rest with us : when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels," literally at the revelation (*apokalupsis*) or as the word is rendered in 1 Pet. i. 7, the *appearing* of the Lord Jesus. Here again it is admitted by all classes of expositors that the coming, as in the previous passages, can mean nothing but His personal advent at the close of the present age.

So in the second chapter he writes, "Now we beseech you, brethren, by [or touching] the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together unto him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of the Lord is at hand [or as the Revised Version properly renders it, "is present," has set in, has already commenced]. Let no man deceive you by any means; for that day will not be, except there come a falling away [the apostacy] first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God, sitteth in temple of God, showing himself that he is God. Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you I told you these things [proving how important it was in the estimation of the Holy Ghost for believers to know them]? And now ye know what withholdeth, that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth [or hindereth, or restraineth] will hinder or restrain, until he [the hinderer or restrainer] be taken out of the

way. And then shall be revealed the lawless one, whom the Lord Jesus shall slay with the breath of his mouth, and bring to nought by the manifestation of his coming" (R. V).

It would be at least interesting, if the beloved brethren, who all their life time have taken it for granted that the coming here is figurative and spiritual, and means the spread of the gospel, the triumph of the church, the conversion of the nations, will kindly inform us by what principle of interpretation, by what law of logic, by what rule of common sense, by what decree of consistency or harmony, they admit every other allusion in the epistles to the coming of our Lord to be literal, and then deny that it is literal in the passage just quoted.

The inquiry becomes more pertinent, when it is remembered that the word translated "brightness" in the authorized version, and "manifestation" in the Revised, occurs but five times elsewhere, as follows: "until the *appearing* of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Tim. vi. 14); by the *appearing* of our Saviour Jesus Christ" (2 Tim. i. 10); "at his *appearing* and kingdom" (2 Tim. iv. 1); "them also that love his *appearing*" (2 Tim. iv. 8); "the glorious *appearing* of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" (Tit. ii. 13). The word translated "coming" or "presence" occurs twenty four times in such passages as these: "Christ the first-fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming" (1 Cor. xv. 23); "I am glad of the *coming* of Stephanas" (1 Cor. xvi. 17); "God . . . comforted us by the *coming* of Titus" (2 Cor. vii. 6); "his bodily *presence* is weak" (2 Cor. x. 10); "by my *coming* to you again" (Phil. i. 26); "not

as in my *presence* only" (Phil. ii. 12). If the two words which are always employed elsewhere to denote a bodily, literal, and personal coming do not denote it here, we may truly say with Dean Alford, "then there is an end of all significance in language, and Scripture is wiped out as a definite testimony to any thing."

But if the coming is thus proved to be personal, it is equally certain that it is pre-millennial. It will be observed that what the apostle calls "the mystery of iniquity" was already at work in his day. But there was something that hindered or restrained its development or full manifestation. It does not matter, so far as the present argument is concerned, what the hinderer or restrainer may have been. It is enough to know that when that hindering or restraining power is removed, the iniquity, thus held back, shall issue in the maturity of its evil, as seen in the wicked or lawless one, who is to be destroyed by the appearing of Christ's personal presence. Nor does it concern the purpose of this argument to ask, what is meant by that wicked or lawless one. Whether it is a person or a system, whether the antichrist or popery, it existed, in principle at least, in the apostle's day, and will be found flourishing in unhindered strength, when Jesus returns personally to our earth. Since, therefore, there was an evil working more than eighteen hundred years ago, under restraint it is true, but still working, and when the restraint is removed, bursting forth in all the energy of its malignant influence, to be consumed only by the personal coming of our Lord, it is as clear as sunshine that there can be no millennium till He come.

Such a conclusion is also in precise accord with the

uniform teachings of our Lord and of the Holy Ghost concerning the moral characteristics of the last days of the age in which we live. For example, we find the Saviour saying, "As it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all. Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom, it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed" (Luke xvii. 26-30). Again, "When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith upon the earth?" (Luke xviii. 8). Again, when there is "upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring, men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth; THEN shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory" (Luke xxi. 25, 26). Again, "Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away. And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be over charged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth." (Luke xxi. 33-35).

In like manner the Holy Ghost warns us, "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, un-

thankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof." (2 Tim. iii. 1-5.) "Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of His coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." (2 Peter iii. 3, 4.) There is much more of the same sort, which there is not time to quote; but it is needless to say that there is nothing in conflict with this testimony from the first of Matthew to the last of Revelation.

In the second place, our Lord and the Holy Ghost speak of the state of things during the present dispensation in such way as to preclude the possibility of a spiritual Millennium, or the universal triumph of the Church, previous to His personal coming. In the seven parables of Matt. xiii. which confessedly furnish a prophetic picture in outline of this entire age, we are told of one part of the seed, the word of God, caught away by Satan from human hearts; of another part having no enduring root; of another part choked with cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches; and only one-fourth part brought forth fruit, and this variously, some an hundred fold, some sixty, some thirty. We are also told that the tares and wheat will grow together until the end of the age, when they will be separated only by the personal interposition of the Son of man at His coming.

His disciples He addresses as a "little flock;" (Luke

xii. 32); he says to them, "In the world ye shall have tribulation" (Jno. xvi. 33); tells them that "because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax faint" (Matt. xxiv. 12); and never once does He so much as hint at a time before His advent when they were to achieve universal success or lay down the cross. If it be said that such success is implied in the commission, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature," the answer is that it is not implied, because the Saviour added, "He that believeth not shall be damned." If it be said that it is implied in the promise, "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you," the answer is that it is not implied, because notwithstanding the presence of the Holy Ghost, Israel became almost wholly apostate and corrupt, only an Anna here and a Simeon there true to God amid abounding wickedness at our Lord's first coming; because the inspired apostles had the presence and power of the Holy Ghost as none have ever enjoyed them since, and yet of all the apostles in all of their preaching, it was true that "some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not," and because it is not a question of the power of the Holy Ghost, but of the purpose of God, as revealed in the divinely inspired Scriptures. Even on the day of Pentecost when 3000 were saved, there were many more thousands who refused to receive the powerful testimony of the Holy Ghost.

Hence, in the third place, there is not a single intimation from the time the Holy Ghost descended on that great day to the close of the book of God, that the church is to win universal victory before the personal coming of the Lord. If there is, let it be pointed out.

On the other hand, "we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God" (Acts xiv. 22.) "Even we ourselves groan within ourselves" (Rom. viii. 23.) "We that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened" (2 Cor. v. 4.) "Unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake" (Phil. i. 29.) "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils" (1 Tim. iv. 1.) "But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived" (2 Tim. iii. 13.) "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try some of you, as though some strange thing happened unto you" (1 Pet. iv. 12.) The whole of the New Testament is addressed to suffering, cross-bearing, toiling Christians in an unfriendly world, surrounded by dangers and delusions at every step of their pilgrim way, and there is not a ray of hope that it will be otherwise till Jesus comes. Then, and only then, will there be a bodily resurrection the national resurrection and restoration of the Jews, the renewal of creation, the removal of the curse from the lower animals, the chaining and casting of Satan into the bottomless abyss, which the Gospel, blessed as it is, has no mission nor power to accomplish. Our beloved brethren, who have the understanding darkened, jump here from the New to the Old Testament, and quote passages that plainly refer to Israel's future gathering and blessedness, heaping upon the poor Jews the literal curses, and quietly stealing all the promised blessings for themselves, in order to make out their spiritual millennium.

But, in the fourth place, all the facts in the history of the Church and world, so far, are in precise accordance with these pessimistic views of the teachings of the inspired word. Not one country, nor city, nor town, nor village, nor neighbourhood has been wholly converted to Christ after more than 1800 years of labour. Not one church or congregation is known, where you may count upon more than one-fourth of the members as really consecrated, separate from the world, upholding the prayer meeting, Sunday school instruction, and every good word and work. In the United States where the bright and cheery optimists boast of more than 10,000,000 members of Evangelical Churches, according to their own figures, there are at least 85,000,000 more souls to be converted than there were in 1800. In the world at large, admitting that there are 400,000,000 Christians, including Bob Ingersoll, Bradlaugh of England, and all the Nihilists, Socialists, Communists, members of the Greek and Roman Churches, and all, in short, who are not professed Pagans or Mohammedans, there are at least 200,000,000 more souls to be saved than there were eighty-five years ago. Last year according to trustworthy statistics, there were in the so-called Christian land of the United States five more murders for each day of the twelve months than there were the year before, and \$900,000,000 were spent in strong drink, while only \$5,500,000 were given to Home and Foreign Missions. All Christendom is bristling with bayonets, and never was the reign of peace more distant; and never was vice in high places and in low more swiftly undermining the foundations of society. This does not look very much like the speedy conversion of the world by the agencies now employed.

In the fifth place, our Lord never once points to the conquest of the church as an argument, incentive, or motive ; but He constantly points to his Second Coming as the appeal best suited to arouse His followers to fidelity, and to guard them against relapse. This is significantly unlike the missionary addresses that are heard from pulpit and platform at present ; and this shows that He does not wish His people to have their eager and solemn outlook for Himself dimmed by the intervention of a thousand years, or any other number of years of a spiritual millennium. In Matthew, for example, He says, "watch therefore ; for you know not what hour your Lord doth come" ; and he pronounces a fearful doom upon the evil servant who says in his heart, " my Lord delayeth his coming" ; and hence begins to live like the world around him. In spite of His warnings He represents the ten virgins as asleep at the time of His coming, and again exclaims, "watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour".

In Mark's gospel He leaves as His last stirring message to His disciples, the words, "Take ye heed, watch, and pray ; for ye know not when the time is. For the Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch. Watch ye therefore ; for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even or at midnight, or at the cock-crowing, or in the morning ; lest coming suddenly, he find you sleeping. And what I say unto you, I say unto all, watch." Of course it will be said that believers can heed this earnest injunction, and be constantly on the watch for our Lord's return, while at the same time they are con-

vinced that He will not return for at least a thousand years ; but with the tenderest respect for the feelings of brethren who speak thus, it is nonsense. They not only do not watch for Him, but they do not talk about His coming, except to ridicule those who watch as a lot of disagreeable cranks.

In Luke's gospel He says, " Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning ; and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their Lord, when he will return from the wedding ; that, when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately. Blessed are those servants, whom the Lord, when he cometh, shall find watching : verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them. And if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants." If a servant can stand with his hand upon the hall-door, and with ear attent for the steps of his master, when he is convinced that the master will not come during his life time, nor for a thousand years, he is a remarkable servant, who ought to be slow to laugh at the absurdity of the few servants, that take the Master to mean what he says.

In John's gospel He said to the inquisitive Peter concerning the disciple whom Jesus loved, " If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee ? Follow thou me. Then went this saying abroad among the brethren, that that disciple should not die : yet Jesus said not unto him, He shall not die ; but, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee ?" It is evident that the early disciples did not understand the coming of the Lord and death to mean one and the same thing ; they understood

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them to mean the very opposite to each other, and that the coming of the Lord would prevent death. It is evident, too, that He would have them fix their eyes, not upon death, but upon His second coming, as the hope set before them; and therefore He could not bid them separate that hope from them by the interval of a spiritual millennium, or any prolonged period of any kind.

Precisely the same thought of the imminence of His personal return pervades the rest of the New Testament. Thus when He ascended from the Mount of Olives in the presence of His disciples, the two men in white said to them, "This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven" (Acts i. 11). Not a word is said about the time of His return, but clearly this was the object of desire and expectation placed before them; and hence the urgency of Peter soon after, when he called upon the Jews to repent, that "times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; and he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began" (Acts iii. 19-21). From that time on, such stirring notes as these ring throughout the inspired epistles: "waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body" (Rom. viii. 23); "waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. i. 7); "we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye" (1 Cor. xv. 51); "for our conversation is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ" (Phil. iii. 20); "when Christ who

is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory" (Col. iii. 4); "keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Tim. vi. 14); a crown of righteousness will He give "unto all them also that love his appearing" (2 Tim. iv. 8); "looking for that blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ" (Tit. ii, 13); "unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time, without sin, unto salvation" (Heb. ix. 28); "the coming of the Lord draweth nigh" (Jas. v. 8); "when the chief shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away" (1 Pet. v. 4); "looking for and hastening [earnestly desiring R. V.] the coming of the day of God" (2 Pet. iii. 12); "we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is" (1 Jno. iii. 2); "surely I come quickly; Amen. 'Even so, come, Lord Jesus' (Rev. xxii. 20). No wonder Mr. Spurgeon in his last annual sermon to his students told them that they must not forget the glorious truth, "*Behold He cometh* with clouds and every eye shall see Him Take your people to the bright future. Arouse their hopes and fire their spirits by the certainty that He who went up from Mount Olivet shall so come in like manner. This seems to me a part of the Gospel, and the apostles never hesitated to preach it."

When our beloved but misguided post-millennial brethren tell us that all this only means death, or the destruction of Jerusalem, or the presence of the Spirit, or the visitation of the cholera, or the calamity of war, or, at any rate, that it can not mean the personal coming of our Lord, because He has not come quickly, they

exhibit a density of darkness and a profundity of ignorance that is truly marvellous. They make the mistake of measuring time by the rotation of the earth upon its axis, instead of consulting the heavenly standard, where a thousand years are as one day. Having their eyes blinded by the delusive coloring which Satan has cast over the boasted progress of the church and the world, they do not see that the Lord and the Holy Spirit would have His people of the first century, as well as the last, unite in the hope of His coming, without the diversion of their thoughts to their own fancied achievements; and they fail to perceive the truth of a wise remark by Archbishop Trench; "it is a necessary element of the doctrine concerning the second coming of Christ that it should be possible at any time, that no generation should consider it improbable in theirs." Nor do they understand an equally wise remark of Bengel on Acts i. 11, "Between His ascension and His coming in glory, no event intervenes equal in importance to each of these two events. Therefore these two are joined together, and it accords with the majesty of Christ, that during the whole period between His ascension and His advent, He should without intermission be expected."

In the next place, there is no such progress as they imagine, at least in the right direction. The gospel has been preached for more than 1850 years. It is estimated that there are now 1,400,000,000 souls in the world. Of this number it is a large and liberal allowance to suppose that 50,000,000 are really converted, leaving 1,350,000,000 unsaved. Within the church the spread of the criticism, higher rationalism, infidelity, false doctrine, the mad demand for pleasure, the empty form of godliness, the

utter desecration of the Lord's-day, thorough worldliness, that has totally obliterated all visible distinction between the great mass of professing Christians and decent unbelievers, is so appalling it is a wonder of grace that the dishonored Lord does not spue the nauseating thing out of His mouth. If all the inhabitants of the earth were members of the church, as it is called, no doubt this would realize the highest expectations of most of our post-millennial friends. But still no doubt many of them would sigh for deliverance from such a millennium. But if the church were a thousand times better than it is, walking in unhindered fellowship with the Father and the Son, still there must be many of our deluded brethren who would grow weary of sickness and death, and of a life passed amid the groanings of creation, and say with their distinguished leader Dr. David Brown, "Never do we please Christ so much as when we refuse to be comforted even with His own consolations, save in a prospect of His personal return;" and when he says again, "that the REDEEMER'S SECOND APPEARING IS THE VERY POLE STAR OF THE CHURCH. That it is so held forth in the New Testament, is beyond dispute." However, it must not be forgotten that "all men cannot receive this saying, save they to whom it is given." Hence it should temper with sympathy and forbearance our judgement of our post-millennial brethren, who are blinded to the truth, when we remember that we also were once blind. Only the circumcised ear can hear the loud and articulate voice, "I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again." The rest of the people that stand by will say, "It thundered." (Jno. xii. 28, 29.)

In the seventh place, there is another argument which one is almost ashamed to mention, and, yet sad to say, it possesses more weight with multitudes than any thing advanced thus far. It is suggested by the question of the chief priests concerning Jesus, "Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him?" There are many on the fence, watching the movements of human teachers to determine on which side to jump down; there are many like an eminent and beloved brother, who said to a friend, "For thirty years I have kept myself in an admirable poise on the subject of our Lord's second coming, being neither pre nor post"; there are many who are waiting anxiously to see what the leaders of church thought are going to do, before they make up their minds as to their own belief and action; and therefore it becomes necessary to refer to this weak and despicable argument. It is found in the fact that not only was the pre-millennial coming of the Lord the faith of the church for three hundred years, as was shown by our brother Mutch this morning, and as has been conclusively proved again and again by research into ecclesiastical history, but it is the faith of divines and scholars, who hold the highest rank in modern Biblical criticism. Bishop Horsley, Newton, Heber, Toplady, Bengel, Delitzsch, Von Hofman, Grau, Anberlen, Van Oosterzee, Christlieb, Ebrard, Luthardt, Lange, Philippi, Bishop Martensen, Weiss, Ohlshausen, Gaussen, Gresswell, Tregelles, Bishop Ellicott, Bishop Ryle, Dean Alford, Faussett and a host of others are pronounced and earnest pre-millennialists in their views and teachings.

But suppose they were not; suppose a declension should sweep the professing Christian body from its

moorings, as it swept away the Jews at the first Advent, leaving only an aged man or woman, here and there, waiting for the consolation of Israel; suppose the dark ages were again upon us, and to all human appearance the entire church were apostate, this need not prevent the humble believer with an open Bible in his hand from receiving and holding firmly the great truth, so fully and clearly set forth in the word of God, that Christ is coming back to our earth, and that He may come at any time, no conversion of the world being predicted as antecedating His personal return. It would be a rich and precious experience to his own soul at least, if received in the power of the Holy Spirit; and without any self-conceit he could refuse to follow those who are "teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." Then whether with many or few, he would know the unspeakable value of "that blessed hope" to separate him in life from the defiling scene around him, to solace him in sorrow, to sustain him in weakness, and to shine like the golden rays of the Morning Star across the deepening darkness settling down into blackest night over an ungodly world. The sweet assurance of Jesus in His unchanging love, "I will come again, and receive you unto myself," would fall upon his ear like the message of the absent David to his expectant subjects, when "he bowed the heart of all the men of Judah, even as the heart of one man; so that they sent this word unto the king, Return thou, and all thy servants" (2 Sam. xix. 14).



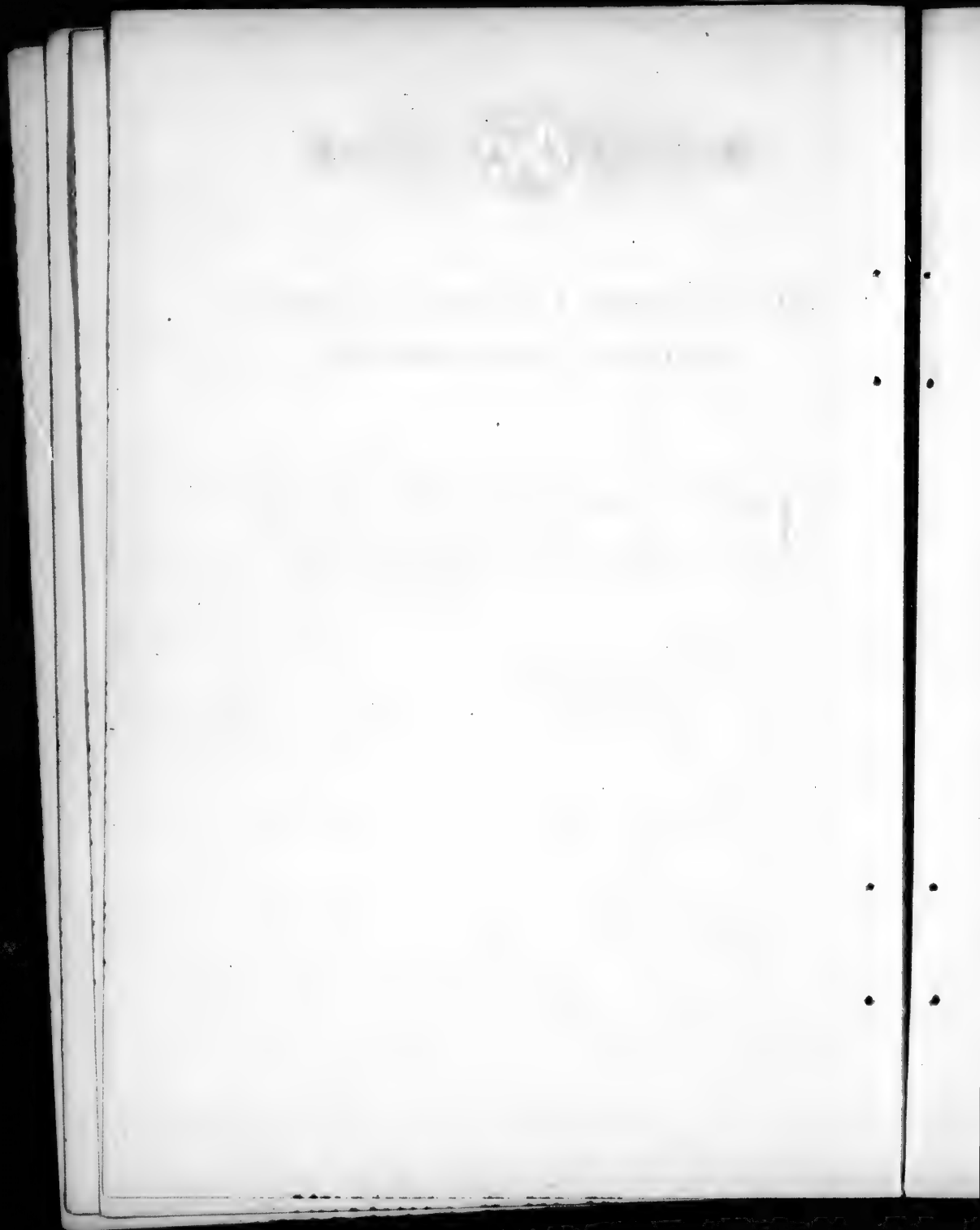
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THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST

THE EVERPRESENT HOPE OF THE CHURCH.

BY

REV. H. M. PARSONS.





The Second Coming of Christ

THE EVERPRESENT HOPE OF THE CHURCH,

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THE Hope of the People of God in every age has been based on His revealed promise of ultimate victory over this rebellious race and the Sovereign sway of all nations. It is prophetically declared in the 67th Psalm *vs.* 1-7.

God be merciful unto us, and bless us; *and* cause his face to shine upon us; Selah.

That thy way may be known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations.

Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee.

O let the nations be glad and sing for joy: for thou shalt judge the people righteously, and govern the nations upon earth. Selah.

Let the people praise thee O God; let all the people praise thee.

Then shall the earth yield her increase; *and* God, *even* our own God, shall bless us.

God shall bless us; and all the ends of the earth shall fear him.

While in this general form the details of the prophecy are not given, yet necessarily they are included. And as the first promise of victory to the seed of the woman over the serpent foe, is unfolded in the series of progressive *ages*, recorded in the Holy Scriptures until all nations own His sway. So, this Hope set before the Race, has a definite form and purpose, as related to the New Testament Age. While blended in all previous revelations, with the wider scope of the relation of the Son of Man to the Human Race as their Head, in this present age, it has special reference to the Church, as the completed Body of Christ. It is of this definite Revelation, we purpose now to speak.

The simplest declaration of this hope is in the words of our Lord to His disciples, just before His betrayal and desertion. John xiv. 2,3. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, *there* ye may be also.

This was said without any limitation of time, and in a way to excite the expectation of a speedy return, and this impression is confirmed by our Lord's remark to Peter, in answering his question concerning John xxi. 22. "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?" The disciples understood and reported that he should not die. But Jesus did not say that. Simply "If I will, &c." This is further impressed upon our minds by the message Jesus sent to the wondering disciples, when He was taken up from their sight, (Acts i. 11.) Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is

taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.

Accordingly we notice :

I. *That the Hope of the return of Christ, is by Himself, pressed upon His disciples as IMMINENT—liable to occur at any moment.* This is clear in the words He uttered repeating its suddenness. Matt. xxiv. 42, 44. Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh.

And again in Luke, in a form which forbids any application of the warning to the Jewish desolation, but expressly asserts a tribulation to "come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth." xxi. 36.

Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man.

This watchfulness enjoined by our Lord is not only to escape a serious trouble but it is also to *stand* before Him and receive the promised rewards of glory. Now this was given for the individual members of His church, and to be available as an inspiring hope, it must be imminent—that is, without any intervening object, that could destroy its power on the human heart, as an object of hope.

Paul felt its power nerving him, through a life of toil, and suffering, and persecutions, to a martyr death, and is still watching and waiting for his crown of glory.

II. *This Hope, as ever-present, is specially emphasized, as motive power, in connection with Christian experience, testimony, and ministry.* The apostle to the Gentiles was led by the Holy Spirit to instruct Titus, an or-

dained minister to "speak, and exhort with all authority," those under his charge to be "looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ." (Titus ii. 13.) This is the central thought of the Christian experience inculcated as the constant habit of the Christian life. For in the verse before—separation from the world, and holy living is the prelude to this abiding faith—and the result in the following verse, is a "peculiar people" "zealous of good works." Not only is this expectation and confidence of our hope, indissolubly bound up with the life of practical holiness—but the Holy Spirit was pleased to connect this expectation of resurrection and translation, with the coming and manifestation of our Lord Jesus Christ. The insertion of this hope before the practical obedience of daily life, indicates its ever present power, as a *motive* to stimulate diligence, in all service, and increasing alacrity in the obedience of faith. In a similar way the Holy Spirit has shown his approval of this truth by linking this hope as an essential part of Christian testimony, with entire loyalty to the living God. The commendation given to the Thessalonian believers was, "Ye turned to God from idols, to serve the living and true God, and to wait for His Son from Heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus which delivered us from the wrath to come. (1 *Thess.* i. 10.) This testimony is conclusive, to show the character of this *hope* as cherished by primitive believers. It was not so much an intellectual belief as a leading and longing desire imparted by the Holy Spirit in His testimony concerning the risen Lord—and stimulating to incessant fidelity in obeying the Lord's command to preach

the Gospel to every creature. It was a cherished part of their gospel and they preached it with such success, that Paul could say to the Romans (x. 18,) "their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world,"—and to the Colossians (i. 23,) "If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from *the hope* of the Gospel, which ye have heard and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven." It is very evident that when this *hope*, (of which Paul writes thus to the Hebrew Christians, "let us hold fast the confession of our hope, without wavering") animated the Christian Church, the testimony of the Gospel was more generally spread throughout the world, than in the centuries in which it was overcome by superstition or infidelity. From the college of Mr. Grattan Guinness more than a hundred laborers for Christ have gone into the regions of Central Africa, all of whom rejoice in this blessed hope—and are waiting for His Son from Heaven—while zealous in preaching the Gospel to every creature. In the China Inland Mission—Mr. Hudson Taylor at the Mildmay Conference last year, sought for seventy volunteer missionaries for that vast empire, at their own charge, and more than that number responded in a few days, every one of whom confessed this ever-present hope—while moved through His Spirit, to this self-denying work. And no less force is manifest in urging this as a motive in the ministry of the word. That sacred ordinance which expresses the union of the believer to Christ, and affords divine nourishment to the new-life—while reminding us of finished work in our behalf of resurrection powers and life is yet to be duly observed

"till He come." The motive to loyalty and most faithful observance, is found in the glory of God, which shall be manifested in His appearing "unto them that look for Him," "the second time without sin unto salvation." (Heb. ix. 28.)

III. *The ever-present Hope of the Church, is adapted to stimulate faith, by holding it to the expected personal presence of the Lord.* Faith is not the simple belief of an abstract proposition. It is, in its elemental form, trusting a power outside of self, and apprehended through the senses.

For this reason, God gave His Son a body. For this reason, He has a literal body now. And looking unto Him in that Body—as revealed to us in the word, in the place where He now is, constitutes scriptural faith.

Thus believing Him in the word, we have something before the mind as an object when we pray, and that something is declared to be the "image of the invisible God" (Col. i. 15;) and "the express image of His person." (Heb. i. 3.) Now as any believer abides in Christ, he must be looking upon Him by faith and must see something of the "brightness of the glory of God. The more He sees, the more He must strive to be transformed into that same likeness. We do not know indeed what the glorious form for each one may be; "but we know, that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is." Now the Holy Spirit adds—"Every man that hath this hope in Him, purifieth himself, even as He is pure." (1 John iii. 3.) The object here is plain. By faith we see Him now, and we long to be like Him, and then we shall see with the eye of the spiritual body—and "see Him as He is." And why

this purification, unless the longing desire to be with Him, and to be as He is. "Looking unto Jesus"—we see Him, and draw the needed supplies for the wilderness journey." "Looking for Jesus"—we long to see Him "face to face" and to be like Him, and with Him for ever. Thus a true faith in the living Christ, must increase under the power of this revealed and expected *personal presence of the Lord.*

IV. *This Hope as presented to us, in the New Testament, is independent of Chronology and Signs.* That this Hope makes the resurrection and translation of believers from this earth, co-etaneous with the summons of the returning Lord from the air—and thus introduces the believer to the fullness of salvation and glory—cannot be denied by any one who believes the Word of God. These things are expressly asserted in the words of the Holy Ghost written in 1 Cor. xv. 23, and 1 Thess. iv. 13-18. Neither is there a single event found predicted in the New Testament which could have hindered the appearing of the Lord, because of its interposition. On this point a recent writer (Rev. A. W. Pitzer, D.D.) well remarks: "The time of His coming is so entirely unknown and uncertain, that for aught that any mortal knows to the contrary, *it may occur at any moment.*" No where in the New Testament is any definite period of time interposed between the believers of any generation and the visible bodily return in glory of their absent Lord. The entire teachings of Christ and the Apostles were intended and adapted to produce in the hearts of Christians the hope and the expectation of the return. They were exhorted to wait for the Son from Heaven; to watch for the Coming of the Son of Man, to be ready

for Him at any moment. The time was so absolutely uncertain, that none but wicked and slothful servants would say, 'My Lord delayeth His coming,' and this method of teaching did keep alive in the hearts of Apostolic Christians the eager expectation, and the longing desire and hope for their Lord's return."

"Believers of this day are eighteen centuries nearer His coming than were the men of the first century. What is the attitude of the Church toward His Second Advent? Is there throughout the Church, the eager hope, the longing desire for the Lord's return, that characterized the Church of the first three Christian centuries? Do the ministers hold up, according to the proportion of faith the Blessed Hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ? Is there on the part of believers a waiting watchfulness for the coming of the Son of Man? If the time is so uncertain that no mortal knows, or can know the day or the hour of the coming, where shall we find the practical fruits of such uncertainty? The unbelieving would scornfully ask 'Where is the promise of His coming'? And alas! many professed servants say, 'My Lord delayeth His Coming, He will not return till the close of the Millennium.' And thus this most gracious and glorious truth of the Word is emptied of its power, and the Church is defrauded of the comfort and strength in this Blessed Hope. Meanwhile the progress of humanity—the development of the race—the dawn of the Millennium—the future golden age—the triumph of the Gospel—the conquest of the world for Christ—even Death the last enemy—are substituted for the Return of the Bridegroom Himself, in bodily visible glory. No wonder

that having lost sight of her absent Lord, and the promise of His return, the Church is now saying I am rich and have need of nothing, knowing not, that she is wretched and miserable and poor, and blind and naked."

"If all discussions of the times and seasons, all arbitrary and unscriptural fixing of the exact order of the 'last things' could cease, and the promise of the return of Jesus be exalted to its proper Scriptural place of the *Blessed Hope*, the gain both to the believer and to the church would be incalculable."

"Surely the heart of every saint ought to thrill with unutterable joy at the thought of beholding the glorified form of the Son of Man. Surely, I come quickly, saith the Lord. Let our hearts and lips respond, even so Come, Lord Jesus." (The Pres. Review.)

V. *This Hope entered into the Personal Experience of primitive Christians for encouragement and comfort in the present life and was intended for all Christians until its realization.* This gave it such signal power in their lives. And it had this effect because of the position actually occupied by believers of that day. They were risen with Christ, and this was not a mere sentiment or article of a creed. There was a reality in the words of the Holy Spirit to the Ephesians,—"hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus," which could only result from the constant hearing in the Spirit, "the preaching of Jesus and the Resurrection." This testimony concerning the risen Christ so came from the view of Him by faith, and the abiding in His presence that the power of His resurrection was felt, and manifested in the unceas-

ing energies of the early Church. No one will be governed by the ever present Hope of the coming Christ who does not enjoy the abiding presence of the Risen Christ. Thus when Paul was longing to know the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death, He also said in the Holy Spirit "I press toward the mark, for the prize of the (up) calling of God in Christ Jesus"—referring to resurrection—and then declares his citizenship to be in Heaven, whence he and all who believe with him look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: "who shall change the body of our humiliation, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body." This is the translation of the living believer. Here from his risen state in the Lord he longs for Jesus, and is stimulated by the prize held out to the resurrected and translated saint. That this was a part of his habitual experience under this hope is seen in the grand pean of this heroic martyr, when awaiting his death sentence.

"I am now ready to be offered."

"I have fought a good fight."

"I have finished my course."

"I have kept the faith."

"Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge shall give to me in that day: And not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing." This experience had been the apostle's working capital. This, under the divine Spirit, had stimulated him in many fierce encounters with the foes of Christ. He had been girded many a time, when just ready to give up by this divine view of his crown, to be laid up on high as placed upon his brow

for the glory of His Master. And what was strength for him, and help for him, and encouragement to him on the dusty and dangerous road of life, is the same, 'he Holy Ghost declares, for all them that love His appearing. Let us ponder that word "Love." It is not "accept" nor "believe" nor feebly "assent" to the divine truth of *His appearing*, but to them that "love" His appearing. The covetous man, be he minister or layman, does not *love* his Lord's appearing, for it would hinder his growing greed of gain. The worldly man does not *love His appearing*, for it would interrupt some very important plans of his present life. Brethren, do we not need great grace to hold this hope of the imminent return of our Lord, in the *love* of it and not merely from an intellectual or logical conviction. The experience of this Hope is also evident in the faithful ministry of Paul to the Colossians, when he says "to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you the *hope of glory* whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may *present every man perfect in Christ Jesus*." Here we see the results of service are to be presented to the Lord at His return in glory and if a believing child of God, closes his eyes to this hope, declares it to be still a mystery, while God says (Col. i. 26) it "is now made manifest to His saints" how can his service receive the blessing of the Holy Spirit or bring a blessing to his own heart.

But the experience of the hope of the Lord's coming is expressly given to comfort us under the shadows of the grave, and the ruthless assaults of him, who has the

power of death. Of no other truths revealed in the whole Bible, has the Holy Spirit said to the mourning disciples of Jesus, "Comfort one another with these words." In the tenderest sympathy, with all sorrowing believers, the Lord has written to us "We would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning them that fall asleep: that ye sorrow not, even as the rest which have *no hope*." Then many will die, who have *no hope* in their death. What this hope is—immediately follows. It is our express revelation in details:

First—Those who have fallen asleep in Jesus will God bring with Him—that is as He raised Him from the grave.

Second—We that are alive shall in no wise precede—or come before them.

Third—The Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel and with the trump of God.

Fourth—The dead in Christ shall rise first.

Fifth—We that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds.

Sixth—To meet the Lord in the air,

Seventh—So shall we ever be with the Lord—no more parting—together with all in Him—recognition—reunion.

These details fix the truth of *resurrection unto life* announced by our Lord in John v. 29; and declared in Rev. xx. 6; to be the first resurrection of those who "lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years." "The rest of the dead," who have *no hope* in the coming of the Lord a second time, "lived not until the thousand years should be finished." How can the children of

God, who live on this hope—ever looking to their risen Lord—ever looking for their coming Lord—mourn for their departed ones who are fallen on sleep in Jesus—as those do, who know Him not, and have “no hope!” Is it not a denial before men of the most precious hope God has given? Is it not dishonoring to the Spirit of God, who offers this precious consolation from the very presence of Christ? The Lord declares the blessed hope of His appearing, so that our eyes being lifted to Him and resting on this word of promise—may find even now the dark chasm of the grave eternally bridged—and for the believer, *death abolished* forever!

VI. *The return of Jesus for His people—as an ever-present hope—becomes the strongest incentive to diligence in evangelizing the world.* To preach the Gospel of grace, to every creature, has been the standing order to the Church for nearly nineteen centuries. For three hundred years looking for the Lord, the Church obedient to the last command, went into all the then known world, and carried the message of salvation, stimulated by the ascension message—“This same Jesus—shall so come”—To preach this Gospel in this way, has been the Divine plan of bringing sinners to Christ, in every part of this Dispensation. God has made no mistakes. The Holy Spirit has fulfilled His office in each generation of the race since our Lord ascended. His work has been no failure. And yet the multitudes unsaved increase faster every year, than those saved.

In saying this we do not minify the number of the covenant seed given to Christ. We are assured that an innumerable host will surround the Throne of His glory in Heaven. This host will embrace that portion of our

race, the largest part—who have not sinned after the likeness of Adam's transgression. It will also include all who have received the Lord Jesus by faith, and followed Him in their life. Yet when we remember the answer of our Lord to the Jew who asked Him, "are there few that be saved?" "Strive to enter in at the strait gate; for many, I say unto you will seek to enter in and shall not be able." We may well consider the present state of professed believers—for to none others could the answer apply. And if our Lord thus spoke to a *self-righteous—moral—formal—deluded—conceited—and arrogant* people—these words so contrary to the pride—and hope—and expectation of the children of Abraham—what would He say were He now to speak to the Church, of which the Jewish body was the type? With all the light of the New Testament, poured out by the Holy Spirit on the darkness of the world—for nineteen centuries—we can have no uncertain answer to this question. It is written in bold letters by the pen of inspiration "Because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth." But the gospel of grace is one thing, and the gospel of the kingdom is quite another. The one is to the sinner for his salvation, and qualification as ruler of the coming kingdom. The other is of the coming kingdom. The latter was preached by John the Baptist—our Lord—the twelve and the seventy. The nation refused the kingdom. The Lord told them Matt. xxi. 43; it should be taken from them and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. The preaching of Christ to lost sinners, in this Dispensation is to *get that nation*. Man looks upon the Gospel as an economy for saving the race. That economy in God's

revelation lies beyond the present one. The blessed Hope of the Lord's return to the air pavilioned in glory to receive His own Bride, is the bright, the morning star, that shall usher in the Day of the Lord. The Gospel of the kingdom is now being preached the wide globe around, for a witness to all nations. Meantime we have the word of prophecy—more sure—from the startling and rapid fulfillment of the things predicted in the last days. "Whereunto, we do well to take heed in our hearts, as unto a lamp shining in a squalid place—until the day dawn, and the day star arise!"

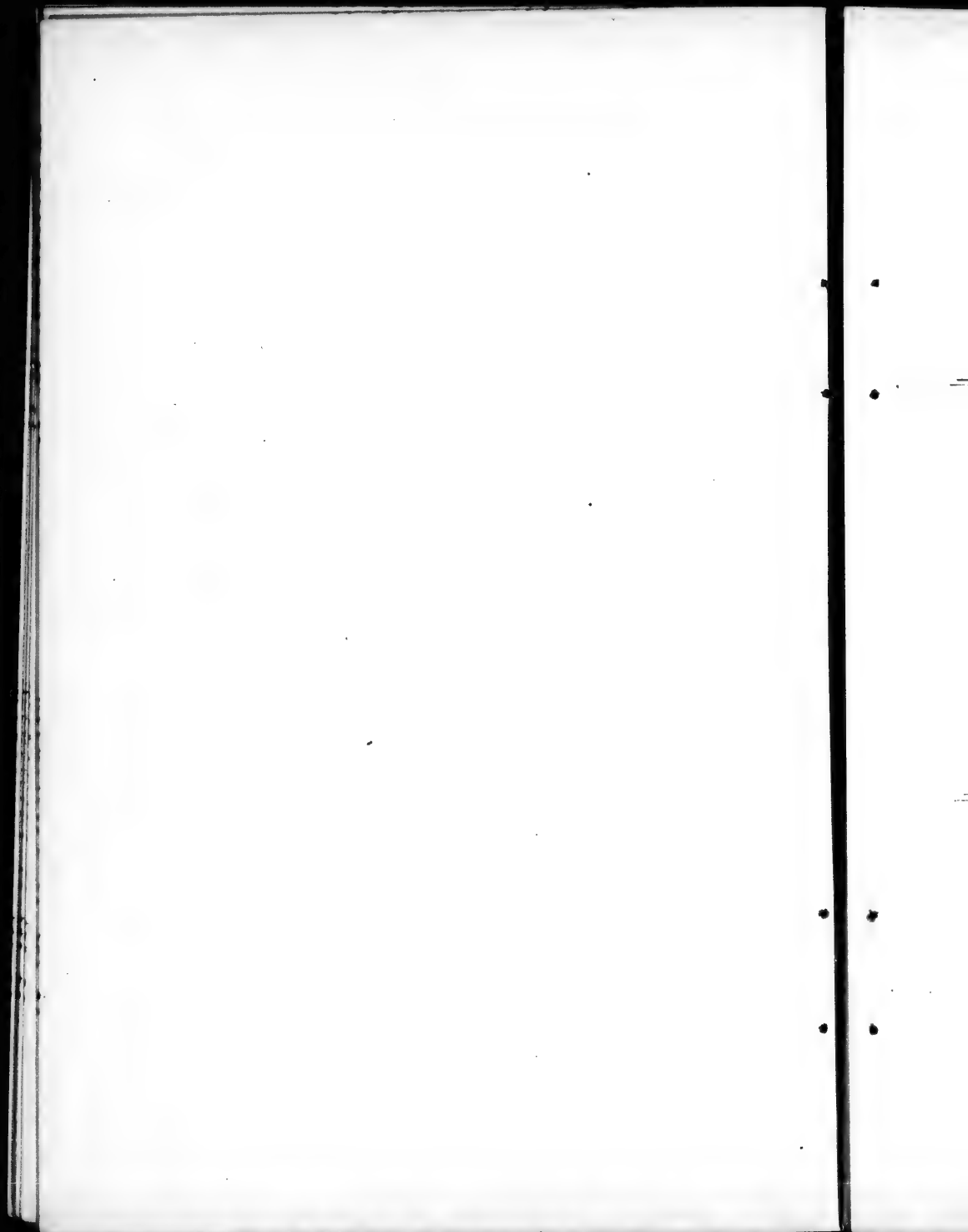
VII. *The Coming of the Lord—as an ever present hope, is adapted to secure in the best way, the purpose of this age—the ingathering of first-fruits—the Pentecostal harvest, through resurrection and translation.* We forget often, that the Lord has definitely revealed the scale of reckoning that governs His heavenly actions. We are by nature prone to strong expectations in the future. Therefore He has bid us to run with patience the earthly race looking unto Jesus, the Author and Ender of faith. And in this earthly race, he has bidden every believer to be a witness for Him before sinners, He has promised to make this testimony sure and fruitful. "Lo, I am with you to the end of the age." The indwelling of the Holy Spirit fulfills this, and as He takes of the things of Christ and shows them to the believer the unfolding of this Divine Hope shines out of the luminous pages of the New Testament with increasing clearness.

The apprehension of this Hope is the revelation of the Holy Spirit to the believer as really as the revelation of Christ to him began his divine life. No truth is known by any sinner till taught him by the Spirit of

God. And all who know this blessed hope, can remember something of the way in which they have been led. Many years since I was deeply interested in knowing this hope for present joy, and read the writings of beloved men of God in favor of it, and of them opposed to it without being convinced of the truth. I was not on the fence, but earnestly desired to know definitely the power of this Blessed Hope. Receiving no light, I continued to teach the truths I had learned from the Spirit concerning the Lord. At length, leading a large adult class, in the consecutive study of Holy Scriptures we were led to search for the meaning of the text, by comparing Scripture with Scripture, praying for light, and not quoting first the opinions of men, or giving our own. Having thus gone through many books of the Bible we went through the Gospel of John within four years, three times. The first time we were taken up with the ordinary meaning of the words. The second time the Holy Spirit was discerned in great clearness by many, revealing Jesus to us as a most precious Saviour, living now and exercising His holy and prevalent intercession. The third time we seemed to sit with the disciples, at the feet of Jesus Himself—seeing Him by faith in the Heavenly Place, and rejoicing to hear His voice, in the words He spake to us every day. It was really John xv. 7, with many of that class. Abiding in Him, and His words abiding in us, it was easy to pray, and to receive that for which we prayed. After a most delightful study in the closing chapter of the Gospel, one bright Lord's Day, as I walked home from the class, the thought flashed into my mind—the Lord Jesus opens that Day of a thousand years, as well as closes it by personal man-

ifestation of Himself. I have that truth fastened in my mind by the Holy Spirit from that day to this. Jesus will come. At any day He may fill all believing hearts with joy—by giving them bodies like His own—bodies of glory—in which they shall glorify Him forever. Subsequently through the similar process of searching the Scripture—to see and hear and know the Lord Himself speaking to me—I was led to see the truth of the two Resurrections, as fitting His Manifestation of Himself, at the opening and closing of the Day of a thousand years. Later still, the position, and place, and promise to the Jews came out plainly on the scroll of Prophecy. And as in the deepening twilight—to the searching gaze of the uplifted eye, star after star shines forth in resplendent beauty, till the whole Heavens is ablaze in the jewelled night—so to the reverent eye of faith—uplifted through the increasing darkness of the present age—there breaks forth from the firmament of the Divine Scripture the thickening truths of Eternal promise—each in its order and beauty—lighting us forward to the dawn of an Eternal Day.

We are met, beloved brethren, to look into the words of hope and joy sent to us from our Lord, concerning His return. The Hope which has thus far been the guiding star of the church, by Divine appointment, will soon be realized. "The Lord will come." "And now, little children, abide in Him, that when He shall appear, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His Coming." 1 John ii. 28.



THE PRACTICAL POWER OF THIS HOPE
IN THE
FORMATION OF CHRISTIAN CHARACTER.

BY
REV. W. J. ERDMAN.

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IT is written of the saints at Rome "Ye become obedient from the heart to that form of teaching whereunto ye were delivered". Rom. vi. 17.

The teaching was like a type whose impress they received, like a mould into which their thoughts and life were run, and to whose form and pressure they yielded themselves.

Whatever teaching was given to them is given to us who are of the same body with them ; and for whom the same epistle was written. The "common faith", Titus i. 4, of all the epistles is the one unchanging pattern by which to work ; the perfect royal law of the new man ; the mirror of the glory of the Son of God into whose image the beholder is changed.

The believer in Christ Jesus is not at liberty to become a Christian of any fashion he may choose. Once for all

the ideal of saints is portrayed in the divine Word, and to it and to it alone the believer must be conformed; and the one characteristic imparting tone and harmony and a luminous glory to all the features and graces together is the hope and love of the second appearing of the Son of God.

Since every virtue and holy excellence of the Christian is related in the Scripture to this great expectation, it follows that ignorance or disobedience of the express command to watch and wait for the Son of God from heaven, or any substitution for His personal return, must result either in a defective development of the new nature or in an experience not so spiritual and heavenly as it otherwise might have been.

It is not meant that the possession of this one characteristic will make up for the lack of other graces or that all who are looking for the Lord are more holy and heavenly-minded than those who put far off his return or substitute other events for it; but rather that any believer however great his love of the Lord and his devotion to him may have been up to a given time, will find on the belief of this all touching truth *from the heart*, his heavenly mindedness increase, his sympathies deepen and broaden according to a fuller knowledge of God's purposes and plans in times past and present and for the ages to come.

To more than one Christian the reception of this truth was—to use a too familiar phrase, like a “second conversion,” and all life thenceforth took on new form and color; to some it came like a trumpet blast to rouse from spiritual lethargy and death; and for others it cut the last tie of worldliness, and forever dissipated the dream of a

permanent improvement of the world in its present form, and of the earth as the abode of everlasting righteousness and enduring peace before the Lord comes; and for all, its necessary tendency is to lift the soul to a height and air of vivid personal relations and converse with the Son of God.

Nor is it the purpose of God since the apostolic day that anything should for motive and for influence take the place of the "blessed hope." His providence of a seeming delay does not set aside his written word. He has hidden counsels we know not of, but our duty is to work and watch and wait. He is his own interpreter of his own mysteries. Nor can death be made the source of motives of holy life and endeavour.

Whatever may be the blessed state of saints between death and the resurrection, it is not the time according to the Scriptures of reward, or of inheritance, or of sovereignty, or of manifested glory.

All these and their implied mysteries of holy, reverent, loving fellowship with the Lord and perfected powers of spirit, soul, and body for the exercise of royal and priestly ministries belong to "his appearing" and "that day."

It was a Paul once caught up to the third heavens and hearing unspeakable words, who would overleap this interval of waiting; "not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon that mortality might be swallowed up of life"; 2 Cor. v. 4; and knowing all this as possible only at the return of the Lord, he also wrote when aged and with this interval as likely for him: "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith, henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous

judge, shall give me at that day, and not to me only, but unto all them also that (have loved) love his appearing." 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8.

How true to the word but contrary to modern "advanced thought," in the pulpit and out of it, is the prayer of the English burial service touching this point and to which our longing hearts must ever respond :

"That it may please Thee shortly to accomplish the number of thine elect, and to hasten thy kingdom, that we with all those that are departed in the true faith of thy holy name, may have our perfect consummation and bliss, both in body and soul, in thy eternal and everlasting glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord."

This doctrine therefore, that had so much to do with the life and character of a Paul and of all the saints to whom he and the other apostles preached and wrote, just as vitally concerns us who are heirs of the same promises and predestinated to be conformed to the same image. And no one can deny, with a Paul and a John in mind, that such a belief, even in the case of a saint already possessing graces and virtues to a high degree, tends to perfect and complete, to elevate and illumine all.

Hours could be given to the confessions of saintly men and women confirmatory of this statement ; but in brief, only a few testimonies of saint and scholar will be adduced. Bengel says (1 Th. i. 10) "To wait for the Son of God is the most appropriate mark of a true Christian ; Alford. (1 Cor. i. 7.) Such waiting "is the greatest proof of maturity and richness of the spiritual life" ; Riggensbach (1 Th. iv. 13-18) "when the life of faith rules in due force we again meet likewise with the apostolic hope and aspiration in living freshness. That watch-

ing and hoping are so unfamiliar to us is a defect. The more we become heavenly in our character and thoughts the more also does the stream of human history appear to us as a hasting towards the coming of the Lord ;" and Luther was hardly willing to consider any one a Christian who did not eagerly long for the " day of Christ."

These and many other testimonies might be given touching the power of this hope to impart to Christian life and experience fullness and symmetry, depth and richness ; but the mind of the Lord in his Word must be at this time preclude even the most positive human testimony. So very large a proportion of the Word would never have been given to this doctrine if it were not intended to have a fundamental and permanent relation to the upbuilding of the Christian on his most holy faith.

A brother in the Lord, well known and beloved as a witness of this great truth, affirms " It is mentioned 318 times in the 260 chapters that make up the New Testament ; or, if the whole book is divided into verses it occupies one of 25 verses from the first of Matthew to the last of Revelation." J. H. Brookes in " Present Truth."

The testimony of the Word on this subject may be considered in regard to the Faith and Love and Hope of the Christian.

I. The Faith of the Christian as to salvation and service and sufferings is in the earliest and latest apostolic testimony inseparable from the Return of our Lord.

1. In his first epistle Paul directs the eyes of believers heavenward to look for their coming Saviour ; " ye turned from idols to serve the living and true God and to wait for his Son from heaven whom he raised from the

dead, even Jesus which delivered us from the wrath to come." 1 Thess. i. 9, 10.

Of the consummation of their salvation as possible in their life time at His coming, this word is added: "For God hath not appointed *us* to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us that whether we *watch* (are watching) or sleep (sleeping) we should live together with him." 1 Thess. v. 9-10.

The importance and power of this truth in the mind of the apostle to mature the faith of converts just rescued out of the ignorance and abominations of paganism, may be seen in the allusions and reminders of his epistles, how in his brief sojourn of about three weeks among these Thessalonians he had given them much teaching on this subject; and the cry of the mob that raged through the streets of their city "These all do contrary to the decree of Cæsar, saying that there is another king, one Jesus," (Acts xvii. 7;), is an attesting echo of this important teaching.

In latest epistles is found this same use of the doctrine to keep in ceaseless exercise faith and the sense of a nearness to the unseen things of the great salvation. "For our citizenship is in heaven from whence also we look for the Saviour the Lord Jesus Christ." Phil. iii. 20. "Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." 1 Pet. v. 5. "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform (perfect) it until the day of Jesus Christ." Phil. v. 6. "Unto them that look for *him* shall appear the second time without sin unto salvation." Heb. ix. 28.

2. Believers as the servants of the Lord should keep his Coming in view.

The three gospels present him to us as the pattern Servant ever going about doing good, and the fourth as the faithful and true Witness. At the close of the former he leaves us as his servants, "to every man his work," and commanding all to watch for his return; at the close of the latter he is manifested as the Lord of all allotting to some of his witnesses sufferings and death before he returns, and to others that of tarrying till He comes, as for an event ever possible before the end of the apostolic lifetime, and therefore possible in every lifetime since. Matt. xxiv. 43-51; xxv. 14-30; Mark xiii. 32-37; Luke xxi. 34-36; John xxi. 18-23.

When the Acts of his servants are about to begin, their last look at their ascending Lord is forever joined to the hearing of the words "This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven shall come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." Acts i. 11. This promise not only strikes the key note of all joyful praise and worship of adoring disciples, (Luke xxiv. 51-53,) but also imparts a blessed softening tone to the unchanged order "Occupy till I come." Luke xix. 11-28. It keeps "the good servant" in an attitude of soul watchful because "not knowing the time;" Mark xiii. 33; circumspect, "because the days are evil;" Eph. v. 15-16; prayerful lest becoming unwary he incline to say, my Lord delayeth his coming; Matt. xxiv. 58-61; or tempted by the scientific spirit of this evil age, with mockers deny and scoff at the possibility of the coming; ready, as conscious of doing faithful work; faithful, and yet heeding the word; "judge nothing before the time until the

Lord come who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts, and then shall every man have praise of God." 1 Cor. iv. 5; Matt. xvi. 27. In brief, the whole church as one body is seen in the Scriptures while in the exercise and use of all gifts "waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ who shall also confirm you unto the end that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Cor. i. 7-8.

Is the day evil and the soul of a Timothy fearful, there comes from the old soldier whose hard service is almost ended, that ancient military word transmitting from officer to officer the order of the chief commander, "O man of God I *charge* thee in the sight of God who quickeneth all things and of Jesus Christ who before Pontius Pilate witnessed the good confession that thou keep the commandment without spot unrebukeable until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Tim. vi. 13-16; i. 3; i. 5; i. 18; iv. 11; v. 7; vi. 17.

To nourish a joyful spirit in all who toil in love, the exulting word is recorded "for what is our hope or joy or crown of glorying? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?" 1 Thes. ii. 19. In view of the first resurrection and the reward of labor the exhortation comes, "Wherefore my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord." 1 Cor. xv. 58.

3. Believers should endure sufferings in view of the Return of the Lord. Peter whose death for the glory of God the Lord foretold him could well write to his fellows in tribulation: "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the

fiery trial among you which cometh upon you to prove you, as though a strange thing happened unto you, but inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings rejoice, that at the revelation of his glory also ye may rejoice with exceeding joy." 1 Pet. iv. 12-13; i. 7; 2 Cor. iv. 17-18.

Not one word of Scripture teaches that the sufferings of the Church end or the glories begin before the Lord comes. With tender irony the apostle, knowing too well what filth and offscouring the apostles were in the eyes of the world, rebuked the Corinthian Christians for their unseasonable behaviour in acting as if they were already reigning. Not yet had the day come when the saints shall judge the world and angels to whom once they had been "a spectacle" 1 Cor. iv. 9, vi. 1-7.

But what marvellous patience and fortitude, and meekness and gentleness and courteousness and sympathetic power to comfort each other, these trials of faith developed in view of the day of Christ and the glory then to be revealed. Rom. viii. 18.

The touch of suffering like graver's tool or nail-stroke of the sculptor but brought out in high relief and delicate lines the likeness of the Son of God. To be likest him in humiliation may be nearest him in glory. Through what a gamut of virtues the exhortations of suffering are made to run; patience and joy, forbearance and silent; endurance; self-denial and perseverance; cheerfulness and hope.

"Be patient brethren until the coming of the Lord;" Jas. v. 7. "Avenge not yourselves, beloved, but give place unto the wrath, for it is written Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord;" Rom. xii. 19; draw not back, ye have need of patience, the

just shall live by faith ! "for yet a little while—how short ! how short ! the Coming One will be here, and will not delay." (Rotherham.) Heb. x. 32-39.

And to all who would overcome and persevere through faith, the word through the long and hope-deferred years has been, "But that which ye have, hold fast till I come." "Behold I come quickly ; hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown." Rev. ii. 25 ; iii. 11. "Let us then hold fast * * the day is approaching." Heb. x. 23, 25.

II. The Love of the Christian which is the informing spirit of Holiness is inseparable from the Return of our Lord.

"The Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men even as we do toward you, to the end he may establish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God even our Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints." 1 Thess. iii. 12, 13 ; v. 23 ; Phil. i. 9-11.

1. But as our love of God and of men springs out of his love to us it is well to note first of all, that the expectation of Lord's return is used by the Holy Spirit to keep us in the experience and enjoyment of the love of God to usward. The Lord Jesus in his prayer declared of his brethren "thou hast loved them as thou hast loved me," but he associates this love as with its deepest expression, with the glory they are to share with him ; John xvii. 22-26 ; and in a later day of increasing lawlessness and mocking denial of the coming the exhortation of Jude is heard. "But ye beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God,

looking for the mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life." Jude 20-21; John xv. 4-10.

2. Our love of God and of Christ is drawn forth and illumined by the rays of His coming glory, and is one with the hope that maketh not ashamed. This glory is viewed as ever so near and so ready to burst into the vision of the waiting Sons of God, its foregleams already so gild the heavens to the eye of faith and love that it is written "Whom having not seen ye love, in whom though now ye see him not, yet believing ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and *full of glory*." 1 Pet. i. 8; Rom. v. 5.

Our confession of love as individual believers now, is linked to His confession of us hereafter at His coming; and our corporate confession in the Lord's Supper of His love and of our love continues till He come; 1 Cor. xi. 26. How pertinent then though startling that last word of the epistle, "If any man love not the Lord Jesus let him be anathema. Maranatha." (Our Lord cometh.) 1 Cor. xv. 22; Matt. x. 32; Luke xii. 38.

3. Our love of each other as holy ones is bound to the same hope. 1 Th. iii. 12, 13. Our moderation or courteous compliance which will not always insist upon rights says "The Lord is at hand;" Phil. iv. 5; and so our willingness to be defrauded rather; 1 Cor. vi. 1-4; and our unwillingness to judge or murmur against each other; Jas. v. 9; Rom. xiii. 10; in a word, the self-denial of love has its perfect work only in the all-illuminating hope of His appearing. So conjoined are perfection in holiness and the Coming of the Lord, in the epistles of Paul, that whether holiness be considered negatively as "the old man" put off or positively as "the new

man" put on, it is enforced by the appeal to the fate that believers are looked upon as having died and risen and ascended with Christ and as about to issue forth with him in glory at any moment; and the long descriptive list of the old man and of the new man includes about every vice and every virtue, and all as to be put off or put on because of that appearing with him in glory. Col. iii. 1-4, 6. The key-thought is Be what you are; holy, sinless Sons of God; new and heavenly men; belonging up there and only waiting to be manifested such as you are in princely majesty and power. "The very God of peace sanctify you wholly, and your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Th. v. 22. And Paul sums up all holiness Godward and manward and selfward (1 Pet. i. 13; iv. 7) in connection with "the Lord Jesus Christ our hope." 1 Tim. i. 1, "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world, looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works." Titus ii. 21-24. Likewise Peter (2 i. 5-11) links the chain of holy graces from faith to charity both to the entrance into the coming kingdom at our Lord's return in power and glory, and to the study of the word of prophecy which like a lamp in a dusky, dismal place shines on till the day dawn and the day star arise. 2 i. 12-21.

Above all the Spirit speaking through John to those

who have partaken of the divine nature uses language concerning the life eternal in believers that almost blends in one earth and heaven, the present abiding in the Son of God and his instant coming. The holy life and walk is under a near and open heaven into which they may be called in a moment, and out of which they shall be made manifest even in an external splendor and majesty becoming their high estate; and therefore this eternal life which is *now* in the children of God as light and love is seen in John, as in Paul and Peter and James and Jude, in each essential element, wrought out in the fullest, freest form only in the love and hope of "his appearing."

That life of God, from God, for God, awaiting its perfection at the return of our Lord is then associated throughout the Word in each trait and virtue with the love of that appearing. Only by abiding in Him who is the Life Eternal can we grow in His likeness; but then too most truly in remembrance of this word "And now little children, abide in him; that if he shall be manifested, we may have boldness, and not be ashamed before him at his coming." 1 John ii. 28.

III. The Hope of the Christian with its Objects and their peculiar motives of holy living is inseparable from the Return of our Lord.

Because as has been seen the believer looks to the momentous future not only as serving and suffering now, but specially for perfection and freedom from all that stains and darkens and dwarfs, therefore of all peculiarities of the Christian none should be more significant than hope and its rejoicing, than hopefulness and its "cheerful courage;" but this springs not out of a vague fantastic optimism which in philosophic form and poetic phrase



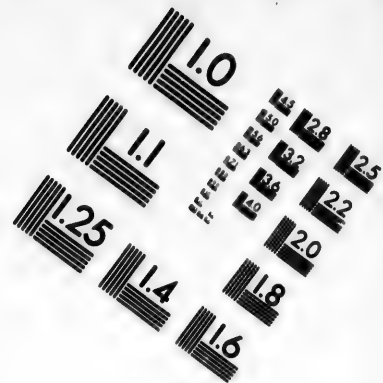
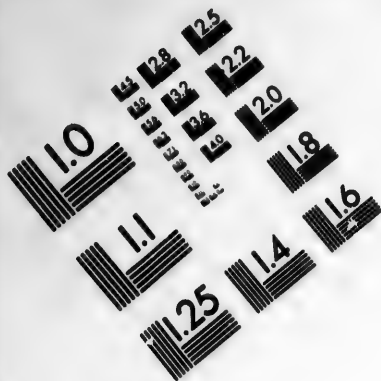
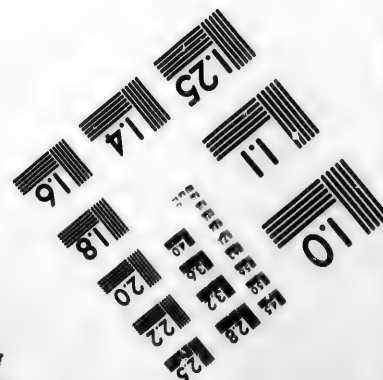
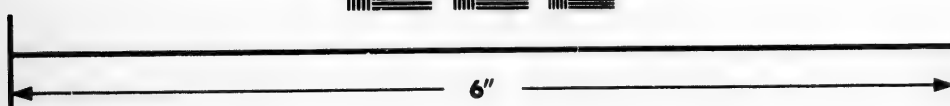
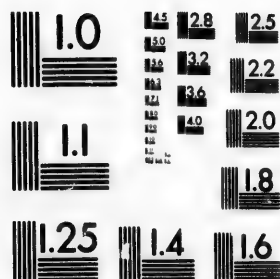


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has affected even the professed people and ministers of God, but it rests upon the firm foundation of the divine Word, and the attesting facts of a groaning creation and of a battle-tossed age from whose woes and whose bondage of corruption there can be no deliverance until He comes with the Sons of God to "have dominion also from sea to sea and from the river unto the ends of the earth." Ps. lxxii. 8.

There is no fear, no trouble, no anxiety, no sorrow, no pain which is not in some way alleviated or enlightened, if not altogether removed and the soul made full of courage, peace, and joy by the remembrance of the Father's house and of the promise of the Lord to come again and receive us unto himself. John xiv. 1-3.

The grave opened to receive the bodies of beloved ones who have fallen asleep in Jesus is to the eye of hope not more open than the heavens from whence with trumpet sound He might even then appear. 1 Th. iv 13-18; 1 Cor. xv. 20-23, 50-58.

In this hope believers are exhorted to comfort each other, and to become a true Comforter is to be most like God the Holy Spirit. In this hope were we saved, and with joyful patience are ardently awaiting the redemption of the body, for in this body of our humiliation we groan and it is not meet for the dignity of our Sonship and fellowship with Christ. Rom. viii. 18-25. In this hope we can feel a more than poetic sympathy with a groaning creation enthralled in its bondage of corruption for He is coming at whose transforming word of power not only will the body be changed but the earth itself, "and the wilderness become a fruitful field and the fruitful field be counted for a forest" and the very air be

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cleansed of the demonic influences that now so mysteriously infect this suffering race. In this hope believers can afford to sit loosely to the things of this world and confess themselves to be strangers and pilgrims on the earth with the elder men of faith who knew the promises could not be fulfilled until the city of God had been prepared and their Redeemer appeared in glory. Heb. xi. 8-16. In this hope the Sons of God are serving being mindful of the kingdom promised to them that love him, (Jas. ii. 5), and are perfecting a holy character according to the pattern of all lowly, kingly ways the King himself once set them when he came "not to be ministered unto but to minister and to give his life a ransom for many." Matt. xx. 28. In a world that knows them not they walk in strange consciousness of a heavenly country and holy city, princes in training for sovereignty, priests perfecting for an invisible temple. 1 John iii. 1-3. Rev. i. 5. In this hope hallowing and illumining every thought and aspiration of a boundless future they would walk worthy of the calling wherewith they are called and live holy, blameless lives, not only in remembrance, of him who loved them and gave himself for them, but also in view of the holy solemnities of the great day of their presentation unto him before the presence of his glory. 1 Th. ii. 12; Eph. v. 22-27; Jude 23-25.

But, to sum up all, this hope considered solely with reference to the believer as working out salvation, sanctifying life in all its relations, enforcing duties, supporting sufferings, would not be so full of power to develop, mould, establish, if it were not made so unspeakably blessed by our Lord's own ardent desire to come

for us that we may be with Him forever. For a believer, born from above, sharing the life eternal of the Father and the Son, belonging to the Father's house, nothing can be more natural for him as a child of God than to go, and to yearn to go where he by birth belongs; but all this cannot compare with the love of Him who says, and is saying in an ever present tense, "Surely I come (am coming) quickly"; and whose loving will it is to have us behold His glory (John xvii. 24), and enjoy in the radiant beauty of holiness, His presence and love, His approval and joy, His power and sovereignty; for we can never and shall never forget, that this unimaginable fellowship of life and glory is the fruit of that love and sorrow wherein he humbled himself unto death, and that the death of the cross; and therefore nothing can be more necessary, more inevitable, more instant than His coming to receive us unto Himself. It humbles one to think of it, of this intense personal desire of Jesus to come for us, and while in a sense of our utter unworthiness we fain would shrink back, yet by it in the same moment we are drawn forward to meet Him for "it is just like Him."

"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called children of God, and such we are. For this cause the world knoweth us not because it knew Him not. Beloved now are we children of God, and it is not yet made manifest what we shall be. We know that if He shall be manifested we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him even as He is. And every one that hath this hope set on Him purifieth himself even as He is pure." (1 John iii. 1-8.)

THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST

AS RELATED TO THE

FIRST RESURRECTION AND THE END OF THIS AGE.

BY

REV. T. C. DESBARRES, TORONTO.

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IT will be well for us as we enter upon the threshold of our subject to have a clear view of the purpose of God in the age that intervenes between the first, and second coming of Christ. The purpose as set forth in the word is of a peculiar elective character, distinguished over previous ages in this that it is an election of sons to glory. The Fatherhood of God in relationship to sons of God through Jesus Christ the Son of God, is simply and grandly presented in the 17th chapter of the Gospel according to St. John. "And this is life eternal that they might know thee the only true God and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent. I have glorified thee on earth, I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify Thou me with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was. The glory which Thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one as we are one, I in them and Thou in

98 *The Second Coming of Christ as related to the*

me, that they may be perfect in one and that the world may know that Thou has sent me and hast loved them as thou hast loved me."

On the ground of accomplished Redemption, the Son pleads with the Father that the Sons of God might be invested with the glory that He is to be re-invested with. He speaks of the glory given Him as theirs. This language is decisive as to the identification of the Sons of God with Jesus Christ the Son of God. As He was glorified they would be glorified. If we refer to that remarkable question put by the disciples to our Lord after His resurrection, we have the opening of additional truth. "Lord wilt Thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" And He said unto them, "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons which the Father hath put in His own authority, but ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you, and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and in Samaria and unto the uttermost part of the earth." And when He had spoken these things while they beheld He was taken up; and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward Heaven as He went up behold two men stood by them in white apparel which also said, "Why stand ye gazing up into Heaven, this same Jesus which is taken up from you into Heaven shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into Heaven." Acts i. 6-11. We learn from this distinct utterance that the kingdom would be restored to Israel after the Living Head and all the members of the body had passed into glory. When the uttermost part of the earth had been reached, and the witnessing power was

over and the Lord had come to receive His people according to promise, then would the words of the two clothed in white apparel have a grand fulfilment. "This same Jesus what is taken from you into heaven shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven." He the Living Head and the members of the body all gathered in manifested power shall descend on Mount Olivet, and then the kingdom will be restored to Israel.

In the 15th chapter of the Acts of the Apostles we have the purpose of God as to the elective character of the age more strikingly and more fully marked. "Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His name. And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, after this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David that is fallen down, and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up that the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles upon whom my name is called." This language rings with the clear ring of the purpose of God. That purpose is clearly stated to take out of the Gentiles a people for His name. The Holy Ghost, through the mouth of James, gave to the church a fresh revelation, and this was quite in accord with what was spoken by the prophets. The prophets had spoken concerning the tabernacle of David being in ruins, especially the prophet Amos with the prediction of its restoration, and the blessing that would come to the Gentiles after that restoration was accomplished, but they gave no distinct testimony as to those who would be taken out of the Gentiles and enter into the relation-

ship and experience of Sons of God during the present age. The Holy Ghost supplied through James what was lacking, so that the Old and the New Revelation were brought into complete symphony. "After this I will return," after the purpose of God had been accomplished in the salvation and glorification of the Sons of God, Jesus Christ the Lord of Glory was to return and build again the tabernacle of David that had fallen down, and the Gentile blessing was to follow.

Thus far we see that the age whether of long or short duration was to be distinguished in the purpose of God for bringing the "many Sons" united by faith to the Risen Exalted Son—to glory. They constitute the church which is the body of Christ. I mean by the Church, the mystery spoken of by the Apostle in his Epistle to the Ephesians of the admission of the Gentiles as fellow-heirs with the Jews, thus forming one body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all. Whatever blessing was to be apportioned to the Jewish nation or to the Gentile race according to promise would follow in due order of time. The Church, the body, of which Christ was the living Head must be completed, and enter into glory, before the apportionment of blessing to any other people. While we have the purpose of God so clearly marked throughout this age, we see on the other hand that the age is an age of increasing evil. Jesus in His sermon on the Mount has given us a view of it in the significant language, "Wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat. Matt. vii. 13.

In His address to His disciples He said, "In the

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world ye shall have tribulation. John xvi. 33. "If ye were of the world the world would love his own, but because ye are not of the world and I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." John xv. 10. In his High priestly prayer He spoke thus: "They are not of the world as I am not of the world." John xvii. 16. Upon His rejection of the Messiah recorded in the 12th chapter of the Gospel according to St. Matthew, He gave utterance in the 13th to seven remarkable parables opening up the mysteries of the Kingdom, and setting forth the evil character of the age. We have the seed of the word sown, but so mighty is the opposing power that but a fourth part of it germinates and fructifies, the wheat and the tares grow side by side, the grain of mustard seed throws out its roots and becomes a great tree, and the birds of evil lodge in its branches, the leaven of iniquity swells. At a glance we take in the situation. The instigator of all evil is present to blind and deceive, his activities and subtleties increasing as the end draws nigh. He is spoken of as the God of this age. 2 Cor. iv. 4. The power of darkness. Col. i. 13. The Prince of the power of the air, the Spirit that worketh in the children of disobedience. Eph. ii. 2. But in the midst of all that deep darkness we have the precious truth flashing forth from the word that the redeemed blood-sprinkled company will be delivered from this present evil age, supported by the power that links them to their Risen, Exalted Lord, and buoyed up by the blessed hope of His coming. With what touching tenderness did Jesus speak to His disciples when He saw them troubled. "I will come again and receive you unto Myself that where I am, there

ye may be also." John xiv. 3. What a cordial to quiet their troubled hearts. After they had been called by His grace, and become objects of His everlasting love they were but to rest confidently upon His promise, "I will come again and receive you unto myself." His language is such as to leave the impression upon their minds that His coming might follow closely upon His departure; even after His Resurrection when He spoke of the witnesses who were to bear His name to the uttermost part of the earth, through the energy of the Holy Ghost, the interval between His departure and presence could not be construed into a lengthened period.

The Apostle Paul in his epistle to the Colossians, reminds them at that time that the Gospel had come to them as to all the world. The purpose of God so far as they knew had a fulfilment, so that He might at any moment appear. There was a Divine reason for this. We see it in the frequent exhortation of our Lord to His Disciples to watch for His coming, for the day and the hour knoweth no man Matt. xxiv. 36; and in the words of the Apostle to wait, 1 Thess. i: 10; to watch, 1 Thess. v: 10; to look for, Phil. iii. 20; and to love, 2 Tim. 8. The waiting watching, looking, loving attitude would bring them within the sphere of the highest honor. Wherever there was a lack of this there would be an experience of loss. To speak of Jesus then as coming again is to speak of resurrection, rapture and glory. There is no resurrection of the just in the New Testament without a rapture, nor is there a rapture of the living without a resurrection immediately preceding it of a different company raptured with it. Our Lord seized the opportunity that presented itself upon the death of Lazarus to associate His coming

with the resurrection and rapture of believers in these remarkable words "I am the Resurrection and the life, He that believeth on me though He were dead yet shall he live and he that liveth and believeth in me, shall never die." John xi. 25. "I am the resurrection" referred to the dead in Christ. "I am the life" to the Living in Him at His coming. From what has passed before us we conclude that the next great event in the history of our world is the coming, or presence of the Lord. As the living Head had passed into glory all the members must be glorified before any purpose of God or blessing can come to any nation or people.

It is my purpose in this paper to confine myself as closely as I can to the first resurrection only alluding to other events that are to transpire to the end of the age as they are connected with it.

We notice as we examine closely the remarkable sermon delivered by our Lord on the Mount of Olives recorded in the 24th and 25th chapters of the gospel of Matthew, that the rapture of the believing watchful company is the sign of the presence of Christ. As Jesus sat on the Mount of Olives He presented before the disciples in response to their desire, the order of events that would transpire to the end of the age. There was first the destruction of Jerusalem which is past, the interval of the rejection of the Jewish nation, their return in unbelief as signalised by the presence of the Lord in the air, His return in blessing with manifested power, and the judgment of the Gentile nations. As He had said "Ye shall not see me henceforth until ye say Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord." Matt. xxiii. 39, it is reasonable to suppose that to the Jewish nation He

would first direct His attention in setting forth the wondrous events and circumstances that would be connected with their return. The prophecy furnishes a confirmation of this, and thus from the 6th to the 31st verse, inclusive, of the 24th chapter we have naught but details of distress, suffering and tribulation, which they would have to experience and pass through till the Lord was revealed from heaven as their Messiah King. But while we see this, we also see with our eyes wide open upon the prophetic page, the dignity and glory that is associated with a distinct order of people. They were to be watchers for their coming Lord. They were not, if they were true to their privileges as sons of God, united by the Holy Ghost to the risen exalted Son to pass through the tribulation, the great, the dreadful portion of a remnant of the rejectors of the glorified Messiah. The language is clear and decisive as to this blessed company "as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be. For as in the days that were before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying, and giving in marriage until the day that Noe entered the ark and knew not until the flood came and took them all away, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. Then shall two be in the field, the one shall be taken and the other left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill, the one shall be taken and the other left. Watch therefore, for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come." Matt. xxiv. 37-42. Such as were ready and watchful were to be raptured before the first pang of distress of that dread hour that was to come upon all the world.

We learn from the 15th verse where the abomination spoken of by Daniel the prophet was

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to stand. It was to stand in the Holy place. The people were to be regathered, the Holy place was to be rebuilt, and the sacrifices restored. As our Lord referred to Daniel and said, "whoso readeth will understand" we have but to refer to him and read in order to understand. In the 9th chapter of His prophetic vision we have the distinct statement that in the midst of the seventieth week, the unaccomplished period of time, the Prince that shall come, the great leader of the Infidel nations, the mighty Head of evil that had been gathering, would cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease, and for the over-spreading of abominations that maketh desolate even until the consummation. Dan. ix. xxvii. The whole prophecy of our Lord is clear with regard to the closing period of this age. Three years and a half counted backward from the 15th verse and three years and a half (the period of the great tribulation) counted forward to the close will make up the 70th week or seven years. The point of commencement is uncertain. There is therefore no intervening event between the present, and the coming or presence of the Lord. I take it then that the presence of the Lord (I use the word presence as it is a more suitable word to express the original as it implies a lengthened period), I say, I take it that the presence of the Lord in the air covers a lengthened period until the final consummation. When Jesus comforted His disciples by the assurance "I will come again and receive you unto Myself." The word "receive" in the original implied "companionship" the very word that is used in the passage just quoted. "The one shall be taken and the other left." As the taken and the left one were both exhorted to watch, we see at a flash

that they were both believers and that only one was obedient to the word of the Master, and for this was borne aloft to His presence. We conclude then that the words of Jesus, "I will come again and receive you unto myself" had special reference to the watchful company. Again in the transfiguration scene we have Moses and Elias in glorified bodies, and Peter, James, and John taken to the Mount to witness the glory. Why the selection of these three? Why were the remaining nine left to contend powerlessly with the demoniac in the plain below? Why was the word "*taketh*" used by our Lord here the very same word that was used in the previous instances? Was this coincidence undesigned? While Moses and Elias typify the order of the resurrection of the dead and the rapture of the living, did not Peter, James and John shadow forth the blessed company of believers who, in the deep darkness would be watching for the appearance of the morning star that was to usher in the coming day.

When Peter alluded in his epistle to this scene of glorious majesty he spoke on this wise "we have also a more sure word of prophecy whereunto ye do well to take heed in your hearts as unto a light that shineth in a dark place until the day dawn and the day star arise." 2 Peter i. 19. If the first Book of Moses be consulted as to any utterance of the Holy Ghost bearing upon this subject we have a striking type in the person of Enoch, "and Enoch walked with God and he was not, for God took him." Genesis vi. 24. "And the Apostle Paul referring to this transaction has said, "And was not found because God had translated him." Heb. xi. 5. Enoch comes before us as a type of those who were to be rap-

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tured before the flood of tribulation would sweep over our world. The "walking with God" implied a readiness as his not being found the secrecy of the rapture. Surely when our Lord said, "watch ye therefore and pray always that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass and to stand before the son of man," Luke xxi. 36, He meant that the watchful saint would escape some fearful trial. Surely when He spoke from the glory to the Philadelphian Church, "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience I will also keep thee from the hour of temptation which shall come upon all the world to try them that dwell upon the earth." Rev. 3. 10, He meant that those who did not keep that word would have to face a terrible hour. To the first epistle of the Thessalonians I would now direct your attention. In the 4th chapter from the 14th verse and onward we have the Word of the Lord "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep through Jesus will God bring with Him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord that we that are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep, for the Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the arch-angel and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air and so shall we ever be with the Lord." As this is the first epistle that the Apostle wrote we would naturally suppose that as the early believers were on the tiptoe of expectation for their coming Lord the Holy Ghost would move the Apostle to

give this doctrine a prominent place in his teaching and so we learn that this and the following epistle are luminous with truth upon this subject. The 1st epistle making prominent His coming for His people.. The 2nd His coming with them. In the 16th verse we read, "For the Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout. This is the first notice of His presence in the air to resurrect the dead and rapture the living saints. And who are the living saints? Do they embrace every believer the one who is watching for His coming and the one who scarcely gives or ever gave the subject a thought?

Let the Epistle speak for itself, glance at the 1st chapter "Remember without ceasing your work of faith and labor of love, and patience of hope, in our Lord Jesus Christ knowing *brethren* Beloved your election of God for our gospel come not unto you in word only, but also in in power and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance Was not the completeness of the Christian Character exhibited in these saints? There was "*the* work of faith the labor of love, the patience of hope." These people had "turned from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for His Son from Heaven." In the last verse of the 2nd chapter. The Apostle speaks of them in joyous triumph. For what is our hope, or joy, or cause of rejoicing are not even ye before our Lord Jesus Christ at His presence, for ye are our glory and joy. At the closing verse of the 3rd chapter, we have the presentation. But what precedes it? The intense desire on the part of the Apostle that they might not be lacking in anything in view of it. "To the end that the Lord may stablish their hearts, unblameable in holiness

before God even our own Father, at the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints." In the last chapter we are furnished with a remarkable exhortation. "Let us who are of the day be sober putting on the breast-plate of faith, and love, and for an helmet, the hope of salvation. For God hath not appointed us to wrath but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us that whether we watch or sleep we should live together with Him."

If these words mean anything, they mean (as the imagery was drawn from the Roman soldiery), that as no soldier was regarded as fully equipped for the battle without his helmet on, so no Christian soldier though he had on the breastplate of faith, and love could come up to the standard of the Great Captain, unless armed with the helmet the hope of salvation. The crowning glory of the defensive armor would be "the *blessed hope*" and thus we see how fittingly the words of the Holy Ghost, come in. "Who died for us that whether we watch or sleep we should live together with Him." Come with me to the 15th chapter of 1st Corinthians. Here we have a treatise on the resurrection of the just. Let me fasten your attention upon the 22nd verse. "As in Adam all die. Even so in Christ shall all be made alive." But each one in his own order, each one, in Christ in His own band, cohort, company, regiment. Christ the first fruits, afterwards they that are Christ's at His presence. It is evident if we examine this passage closely that Christ is not spoken of here as a cohort or regiment, and those that follow as another cohort or regiment. He is simply set forth as the sheaf of the great harvest. The harvest is to be gathered at and

during His presence. The order is clear. Christ the first fruits. That is past—afterward, the next event in order, “They that are Christ’s at His presence.” There is a beginning and a close of this presence. The beginning may take place at any moment. While I speak, the Lord may descend from Heaven with a shout and gather to Himself the dead in Christ, and rapture with them, the living watchful company. Cast your eyes upon the 51st verse “Behold I show you a mystery we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump.” (Why at the last trump—does not the word “last” imply a previous sounding,) when this corruptible, shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written. “Death is swallowed up in victory.”

Though the order is the same here as in the 4th chapter of the Epistle to the Thessalonians, and in the 11th of John, it does not follow that the reference is to one and the same company. This is a different company, as we shall see. It is the closing scene of the presence, as related to the first resurrection. The apostle quotes from the 25th Chap. of Isaiah, eight verse, not as an accommodation, but as a fulfilment. He carries us back to the very spot where there was a prophecy of this wondrous gathering. The Holy Ghost speaking by the apostle, and the Holy Ghost speaking by Isaiah, has His eye upon one and the same event. Let us glance at the passage, “He will swallow up death in victory, and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of His people shall He take away from off all the earth, for the Lord hath spoken it.

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And it shall be said in that day: Lo this our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us. This is the Lord: we have waited for Him; we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation." What is meant by the rebuke of the people being taken away? What else can it be but the veil that is to be taken away from the hearts of the Jewish remnant, when they turn unto the Lord and receive forgiveness at His hands? And shall not this period be distinguished as a period of rejoicing? And what event is to precede and be almost synchronous with this? The resurrection and rapture spoken of by the apostle. "Death will then be swallowed up in victory." In very truth the harvest will all be gathered in, the first resurrection will have closed. If we pass to the 26th chapter of the same prophet, which is but a continuation of the same subject, we will have somewhat the same testimony. In the 14th verse we hear the joyous strains of Israel, "They are dead; they shall not live." Who are these but Israel's oppressors? They shall not live, then. They shall not rise till the resurrection of the unjust. But what company is spoken of in the 19th verse? "Thy dead shall live. My dead body shall they arise, Awake and sing ye that dwell in dust, for thy dew is as the dew of herbs." The very same company spoken of by the apostle. So vast is the multitude to be resurrected that it is likened to the countless drops of dew as they sparkle in the morning sun. And what follows? What is embraced in the language, "And the earth shall cast out the dead"? The word "*Dead*" in the original is the key that opens it. Whenever it is used it refers to the wicked dead. See Prov. ii, 18; ix, 18; Isaiah xiv, 9.

This clause, then, relates to the resurrection of the unjust. The earth so loathes its possession that it casts it out. The Holy Ghost thus testifying, when all the sons of God are gathered in, there was no other to follow but the resurrection of the unjust, at the time fixed on the page of inspiration. And where, upon that page, do we find it? In the 20th chapter of the Revelation, and 5th verse, "And the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished." How fitting are the closing words of the chapter, "Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers and shut thy doors about thee. Hide thyself, as it were, for a little moment, till the indignation be overpast. For behold, the Lord cometh out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity."

The Prophet Daniel points to the same period. There is grouped in the beginning of the 12th chapter and the closing verse of the 11th, a number of startling events, we have mention of the destruction of the wilful King, of a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation, of the deliverance of Daniel's people, and of the resurrection of the just, and as in Isaiah, in order to shew that there is to be no other resurrection of this character, the Resurrection of the unjust is stated to follow in due course. "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, those that awake to everlasting life, and those that remain sleeping to shame and everlasting contempt. The symbols used are very striking of those who awake to Everlasting Life, marking them as belonging to a heavenly people. "And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as

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the stars for ever and ever." The prophecy on the Mount of Olives furnishes us with the commencement of Anti-christ's tyrannous rule. It is fixed at the setting up of the abomination of desolation in the holy place. For $3\frac{1}{2}$ years he runs his course of blasphemy and persecution and is destroyed by the manifestation of the presence of the Lord. "And then shall that wicked be revealed whom the Lord shall consume with the Spirit of His Mouth and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming." 2 Thess. ii. 8. Immediately after the tribulation the Lord is to appear. "Behold the Lord cometh with 10,000 of his saints to execute judgment." Jude 14. He cannot come with them unless they have been first all gathered to Him. "Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun shall be darkened and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from Heaven and the powers of the Heavens shall be shaken and then shall all the tribes of the land mourn and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of Heaven with power and great glory." Matthew xxiv. 30. Here is the period fixed for the deliverance of Daniel's people. Here is the fulfilment of Zechariah's prophecy, "I will pour upon the House of David and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem the spirit of grace, and of supplication, and they shall look upon Him whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for Him, as one mourneth for his only son." Zechariah xii. 10. And here too is the fulfilment of Daniel's prophecy (almost synchronous with these events, only preceding them by a very short interval) of the resurrection of the saints that had been slain under the Persecutor's rule since the descent of the Lord from

Heaven to resurrect the dead in Christ and to rapture the living watchful company. "If the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be but life from the Dead. Romans xi. 15. "Blindness in part is happened unto Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in." Romans xi. 25. Yes, they will all come in, all will be gathered into the Heavenly garner. Heaven and earth will reverberate with the gladsome shout "Thanks be unto God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Had this paper not already exceeded its proper limit I might ask you to consider the 7th chapter of the prophet Daniel. I will pass it by with but one thought, that those who are there spoken of as the saints of the Most High, who suffer persecution under the little horn for a time, times and dividing of time, are a people identical in expression and character to those described in the Epistle to the Ephesians as "sitting in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." In passing from the Old Testament I desire to make this decided statement that the threads of prophecy are broken during the rejection and dispersion of the Jewish nation, and are not re-united until in the purpose of God that nation or a remnant of it returns. We will look in vain therefore for any distinct prophecy in the Old Testament concerning this present age or any prophecy involving the resurrection of the dead in Christ, and the rapture of the living upon the descent of the Lord from heaven as contained in the 4th chapter of the epistle to the Thessalonians.

If we were to find there any reference to Old Testament prophecy such as we find in the 15th chapter of

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1st Corinthians. "As it is written Death is swallowed up in victory" it might well startle us. We find no such reference. God is true to His word. That in Thessalonians is a fresh revelation. It is "the word of the Lord" spoken by His Apostle which was to be distinguished by the presence of the Lord in the air, the precursor of grievous woes upon the earth. "Nation against nation, kingdom against kingdom, famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in divers places." That in Corinthians points to the close of His presence when "the rebuke of His people is to be taken away from off all the earth." In this we mark the perfect harmony of the word.

I have left much untouched, such as the parable of the wise and foolish virgins, the parable of the talents, the judgment of the nations, each of these demand more than a passing notice. As they do not affect the conclusion arrived at in this paper I have passed them by. Just a few words upon the Revelation of St. John and I will close. No one I feel sure can examine closely the pages of this wonderful book without the discovery that there is more than one rapture. That these belong to one and the same company, we cannot for a moment believe. After the witnessing power of the Churches had closed at the end of the 3rd chapter, we behold the first rapture of the sons of God in the beginning of the 4th. They come before us as a pre-eminently honored company. As the judgments thicken, as the seals are broken, and the vials poured out, and the trumpets are sounded, and the 19th chapter is reached, we have presented in one great panorama, all the glorified sons marshalled in different armies, under, their great captain Jesus Christ, The word of God, The King of Kings and Lord

of Lords. As the Holy seer views them ransomed from the power of death and the grave, a glorious raptured body, the church of the Living God, the Bride, The Lamb's wife, he speaks: "I saw thrones and they sat upon them and judgment was given to them, and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus and for the word of God, and such as had neither worshipped the beast, nor his image nor received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands, and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. This is the first resurrection."

As we scan this passage we conclude that there is more than one regiment or company here. There is the first company, highly honoured under the significant designation *thrones*. There are two companies that follow, one slain for the testimony of Jesus and the Word of God, and the other for neither worshipping the beast nor his image. There is evidently an order in time observable. One is slain before the other. At the opening of the fifth seal we are furnished with a description of a certain company with allusion to another that is to follow in the language, "I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the Word of God, and for the testimony which they held. And white robes were given unto them, and it was said unto them that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow-servants also, and their brethren that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled." Rev. vi. 9. At the close of the 14th chapter we have the period fixed when the great harvest is to be gathered in, with distinct reference to the last company who had not worshipped the beast, nor his image, not received the mark

of his name. "And I looked and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of Man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle, and another angel came out of the temple crying with a loud voice to Him that sat in the cloud. Thrust in thy sickle and reap for the time is come for thee to reap for the harvest of the earth is ripe. And He that sat on the cloud, thrust in His sickle on the earth and the earth was reaped." Have we not explicitly stated here the resurrection and rapture of the two companies included in the term "The first resurrection." In entire harmony with the words of the Holy Ghost spoken by the mouth of the apostle when the last one of the sons of God is resurrected. Oh! what a burst of joyous triumph will then be poured forth. "Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory. The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law; but thanks be to God which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ." To conclude, I cannot conceive it possible that our Lord, in addressing His disciples, should so frequently exhort them to "watch" for His coming, without attaching some special blessing to the obedience of His word. If those who were moved by the Holy Ghost to impart instruction for the guidance and well-being of the church of God, not only seized upon that word "watch," but also introduced other words in their writings, expressive of the intense yearning which possessed the hearts of all who believed in His second coming, I do say, with all the tender affection that one Christian should have towards another,

that we must either attach no meaning whatever to language, or believe the word of the living God, that there was a special blessing, honor and dignity in store for all such. If for one single moment we allow any other event, such as the restoration of the Jews, or the millennium, to intervene between the moment we grasp the living Christ by faith and the coming of the Lord, all those words expressive of readiness for that coming might as well be expunged from the Divine vocabulary inasmuch as they cannot be invested with any meaning.

Oh, may each of us who know what is to be linked by faith to the living Christ in glory, through the power of the Holy Ghost, be able to take the words of the Apostle to our lips as an expression of the joy of our hearts, "Now are we the Sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is." 1 John iii. 2. "Our conversation, (our citizenship) is in Heaven from whence also we look for the Saviour the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body, (our body of abasement) that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body according to the working whereby He is able to subdue all things unto Himself." Phil. iii. 21. Just one word, I am keenly sensible of the imperfect manner in which I have presented my subject, and deeply conscious of the objections that can be raised to what has been advanced. Let us pray for more light, for more of the energizing power of the Holy Ghost to search the Word of Truth in order to its right division.

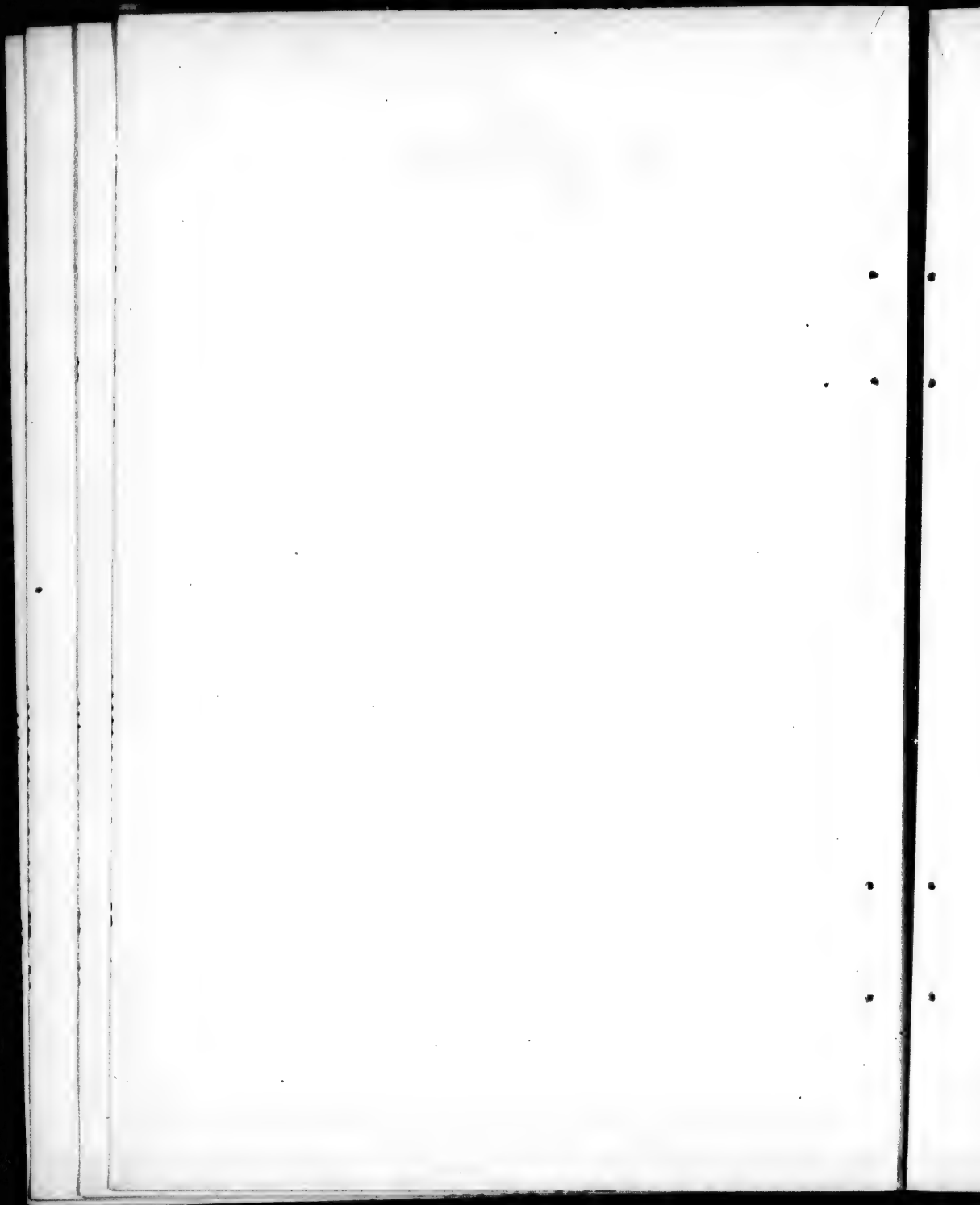
THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST

AS RELATED TO THE

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE COMING KINGDOM.

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AMONGST Christians there is entire unanimity on this cardinal doctrine,—That as truly as Holy Scripture predicts the humiliation of the Messiah it also predicts His exaltation,—that as in the covenant of grace He was foreordained a suffering Sacrifice, He was also a reigning King. Christians are perfectly unanimous in the glorious hope that somehow and in some correct sense the Lord Jesus must reign till all His enemies are put under his feet, till every knee shall bow to Him of things in heaven and things on earth, and every tongue shall confess” Him Lord.

SOMEHOW—CAN WE DEFINITELY TELL HOW?

The theory held during the last three or four generations and held almost universally by our own pious fathers, and still held tenaciously by many of the excel-

lent of the earth is substantially this,—Jesus Christ, endowed with universal authority and power hath already sat down on the throne of heaven ; He hath sent down the Holy Ghost to convict the world of sin, righteousness and judgment to come, and to endow His disciples for the great work of preaching the gospel to every creature ; and the ultimate issue of this work of evangelization patiently persevered in shall be the gradual expulsion and subjugation of sin, and the world-wide establishment of the Messianic kingdom of righteousness and peace. Such passages, as Psa. ii. ; Isaiah ii. 1-4 ; xi. 1-10, and all similar predictions of moral restoration and Messianic mundane dominion given in ancient prophetic revelation are nothing more than graphic pictures generally descriptive of the triumph of the spirit and principles of Christianity to be achieved by the agency of the church before the great day of general resurrection and judgment, when the Lord Jesus shall appear in majesty.

Against this method of interpreting prophetic Messianic revelation, allow me to state these three very decided objections:—1st. objection. The Humiliation of the Messiah (in harmony with the letter of ancient prediction) was the personal experience of a human being on this earth. There was no mere ethical or spiritual fulfilment of pictorial prediction in the birth and life, words works and sufferings, death and resurrection of the Christ. Every prediction was fulfilled literally and really and *here*. Prophecy invariably speaks of the Exaltation of the same Person in the same place—earth. If (as in the first verse of Psa. cx) heaven is meant, heaven is named. But to say as many good people do, that the *first part* of a Messianic prediction refers to the *second* Person of Deity

in the form of a real Man, and that the *second part* of the *same prediction* refers to the *third Person* of Deity, an invisible and intangible Spirit, cannot, I think, be justified by any imaginable canon of interpretation.

2nd objection. Jesus Christ frequently declared both parabolically and by plain assertion that He—the same individual who was to suffer, die and rise again to heaven—was destined to return to earth again as Master and Lord of His servants, as ruler of His subjects, as Bridegroom of His Bride. This is unquestionably the caste and theme of the majority of His parables, of “the Kingdom.” But hold! did He not declare “My kingdom is not of this world”? Yes (*Gk. Ek.*) out of it *i.e.* springing from or emanating from it. This world *is in* His kingdom, not *of* it. *E.G.*, the British empire is not *of* Australia or *of* India or *of* Canada; but those countries are integral parts of the British Empire. It descended on them, asserted itself over them, absorbed them. Even so the Kingdom of Heaven and of God came from Heaven in the person of the Messiah, planted itself here and is destined to assert universal and absolute authority here. Never during the history of William the Conqueror could it be said William’s kingdom is *of* England, yet England was William’s kingdom.

3rd objection. Nowhere does Scripture say the human race is destined to be converted by the Gospel. On the contrary, Jesus Christ repeatedly assures us that at His return even the Christian world will resemble the Ten Virgins—one half deluded and unprepared, the other half weary and slumbering. With all the religious enterprise, with all the denominational competition of these latter days, “when the Son of man cometh will He

find faith in the earth?" Nay, but as to the world in general when Jesus returns it will be as it was in the days of Noah and of Lot, the vast majority totally wrapped and lost in godlessness, worldliness, and ruinous sin.

Every patient student of God's Word I suppose will admit the force of these three objections to what has been popularly regarded as the orthodox view of Christ's earthly kingdom.

Without entering on nice details such as the exact arrangement of periods of time, two salient points of this subject are perfectly plain to me: viz.—

1. As really as the Christ came from heaven to earth at first, and as really as He went away from His disciples near Bethany to heaven, so He must and will in person, in human form, come back to this world a second time. So many Scriptures plainly, solemnly, emphatically assert this doctrine that to adduce proof would consume more than all the time allotted to this address.

2. As really as in literal fulfilment of prophecy He died on this earth, He will certainly reign on this earth over the Jews for one thousand years at least; and the Gentiles over this entire earth shall submit to His authority, those who refuse submission being "broken in pieces." It is impossible now to quote even a sample of those prophecies which pledge all this as the future history of our race or to discuss those events which will usher in this glorious Messianic era. Psalms ii., xxxvii., xlv., lxxii. 72, lxxxix.; Isaiah ix., xi., &c.; Daniel ii., vii., &c. Many of the other prophets and numerous parables of Christ Himself assert this and re-asserts it.

Rather than attempt to review hurriedly and superfi-

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cially so wide an area of prophecy, I have thought that it may be more profitable to examine one, viz.: Isaiah ix. 6, 7.

This marvellous and glorious system of universal government shall be "performed"—realized, not by human agency such as preaching, but "The zeal of Jehovah of armies shall perform this." Contemplate:

I. The central human Nativity—the unique regal Birth of the ages,—“Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given.”

“*Unto us*,” not unto any particular parents or home, but “*unto us*.”

The birth of a boy! An event common enough surely among the Jews of Palestine and among the people of any other country. Why then, may we not ask, should the prophet Isaiah announce the birth of this child with such unusual “pomp and circumstance,” as if it were an event of an unprecedented importance—as if, indeed the Jews and the human family had been utterly childless until now!—Why? This was (*par excellence*) the Nativity, this *The* “Child” of the Jewish nation and of all the ages—the “Son” of God *given* to us in the form of a man, all other human nativities being but, adumbrative, of subordinate to, consequent upon this one.

To mother Eve the birth of this Child was intimated by God Himself, as if *He alone* were the woman’s Seed, and all down through the elder dispensations He was really the ultimate object to which prediction pointed and in which type terminated. To Isaiah (filled with the Holy Ghost) this Child—this Son now appears the solitary individual of the race whose advent is worthy of record—all others sinking out of sight. In Jehovah’s eye and calou-

lation this one Child stood *always alone*—pre-eminently alone, while all other generations of mankind composed only the introduction, the accompaniment, the retinue surrounding and following Him. Of this there can be no doubt with those who accept such passages as the 2nd Psalm, and the 1st ch. of Ephesians, or of Hebrews as inspired truth.

(1.) "Child—born"—the Virgin Mary's First-born.

(2.) "Son—given"—God's own Eternal Son, enshrined in the form and frame of Mary's Child.

(3.) "To us is given"—He who "was in the form of God, and thought it not robbery to be equal with God, made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was found in fashion as a man."

But are we Gentiles warranted in claiming an interest in this unique and wonderful Child? Is He given to "*Us*." Are we warranted in classing ourselves amongst the "All we" cf. Isaiah's 53rd chapter? or among the "All people" to whom the angels brought glad tidings of great joy?

II. His official position and function,—"*And the government shall be upon His shoulder.*"

Not a word in this prediction appears about His humiliation and suffering. He is born to reign. He is given to us as an autocratic potentate. "The government shall be upon His shoulder." On Him shall rest "the government"—the care and responsibility of the government—not a "government" in the limited sense, such as the Jewish, Roman, English, American or German; but in the general indefinite, universal sense, *the* supreme management, control, guidance of all creatures and all their actions.

Mark, I pray you, "The government" in this clause seems to be something different from, and much larger than that local kingship spoken of in v. 7, "Upon the throne of David's kingdom to order it." "*The government upon His shoulder.*" How wonderfully true appears this ancient prediction when we remember that in the person of Mary's Child, was born the "Heir of all things," the "King of Kings and Lord of Lords," entitled to the regal possessions enumerated in the 2nd Psalm, was born the Man whose claim runs thus, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." "All that the Father hath is mine."

On the administration of this general and universal autocracy Jesus Christ has already entered. In that very human form He assumed at birth, He has already ascended the throne of Deity,—as it is written, "The Lord (Jehovah) said unto my Lord, sit thou on my right hand," God "hath set Him at His own right hand in the heavenlies, far above all principalities and powers, and every name that is named."

If such a statement as this of Paul—if these Scriptures of the New Testament be true, surely they present us with a very wonderful fulfilment of this old prediction, "The government shall be upon His shoulder."

In this doctrine—nay, in this realized *fact* every believer cannot but "rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory." It is now a fact that my elder Brother rules supreme. "The government *is now* upon His shoulder—by Him "kings reign, and princes declare justice *now*." Above "the prince of the power the air" and his numerous potent organized agencies, above all monarchs, councils, senates, and legislatures, above armies

and navies, and all those forces operated by advanced science, above the power of human intellect and wealth Jesus Christ now is holding the reins of absolute government. It is concerning my own blessed Lord and Brother, the Bible declares "He doeth according to His will."

This remarkable prediction "in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth," announces Christ's universal reign as Man, in the widest sense over things in heaven and things on earth and things under the earth. "The government shall be upon His shoulder,"—so runs the prophecy. The government now is upon His shoulder, this is the historical fact. "He must reign till He hath put all enemies under His feet," this is the destiny of the great future.

III. The competency, the pre-eminent ability with which Mary's "Child," and God's "Son" is endowed for His official station and work: "His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."

a. *In natural constitution He is "Wonderful."* No other title can convey to our minds approximate idea of His nature. When, gazing on the Babe in Bethlehem's lowly manger, we think that in His small frail person Divinity is mysteriously blended with humanity, that in Him omnipotence and omniscience and all their stupendous possibilities slumber concealed, that the life which throbs in that Infant heart is the essential Life which animates all created things and that the power latent in His brain and arm is the force by which all creation is sustained and operated—thinking of this does not all our science become bewildered and what can we

do but *wonder*—only wonder? When we trace His marvellous history on earth so far as we know it, from infancy, through boyhood and manhood,—His weakness and His might, His utter poverty and boundless riches, His meekness and His majesty, what He said and did, and did *not* do, and suffered, watching Him as closely as we can, from the time He lay in the arms of Mary till that awful hour when He hung on the arms of Golgotha's cross, what can we say but—"Wonderful,"—God was manifest in the flesh!—Most Wonderful!

b. As to this Child's *training* and *education* (if I may presume to use such terms,) for His official work, He is "Counsellor." Counsellor of whom? Where? Revelation answers. Of God the Father, in the cabinet of Heaven. In the work of creation (as detailed in Genesis) we hear a whisper from that council chamber, "Let us make man."

He is "Counsellor" in the most important sense of being a party to that everlasting covenant in accordance with which the stupendous scheme of salvation is to be wrought out to its triumphant issues.

"Counsellor"! Knowing as we do His history of lowly obscurity, does it not seem ironical to apply this title to Jesus Christ? With whom on earth was the man of Nazareth ever taken into counsel? When was the opinion of one so poor and meek ever asked in matters political, military or ecclesiastical, either in Jerusalem or Rome? When did Sanhedrim or Senate ever imagine His opinion worth consulting? I suppose that even the town council of the village of Nazareth never once thought of asking His advice. Yet from all eternity He was the Counsellor of God the Father!

Surely an experience, an education so extended in supreme and divine government makes Him amply competent for the task here described: "The government shall be upon His shoulder."

From the fact that this title is here connected with His assumption of humanity, are we not warranted in drawing the inference that His long and lofty governmental experience is to be an important factor in His great work of saving our poor misgoverned world? And is it not a quiet hint as to where thoughtful people should ask counsel in matters governmental?

c. Is it demanded, What is His *executive ability*? This word replies, He is the "mighty God." This once admitted, it is self-evident He requires neither magistrates nor judges nor officers nor army to administer His laws. The *mighty* God wielding the mighty forces of gravitation and electricity possesses executive force sufficient to ensure obedience. What are the very best laws under heaven worth when perverted by ignorance or rascality, or rendered nugatory by incompetency in the executive? Christ Himself will execute His laws.

d. As to His *heart-power*—His *affection*, what could be greater or more trustworthy? He is the "everlasting Father"—"Father of the ages." In His dealings with the weak wayward sinful children of our race, there is as much heart as head; He sanctifies His legal administration with deep paternal experience and tenderness. Oh, what ineffable comfort it is for us to know that Jesus Christ is not merely our Elder Brother in His true humanity, and the Counsellor and the mighty God, but also the "Everlasting Father," with all that Father's infinite love, sympathy and strength of heart!

e. In governmental policy He is "Prince of Peace"—not, however, of *peace* at any price ; but peace based, as all true peace must be, on purity, truth, and justice—sin washed away and guilt fully expiated, self will and Satan subdued, defeated, vanquished,—peace by wrong being made right—political sin and rebellion eliminated.

It is after the long rebellion has been really crushed, the peace of virtuous citizenship supervenes. It is only after the disease has been perfectly cured by utter elimination of sin-poisoning from the moral constitution of humanity that we may expect perfect health, and the sound peace of health. It is only after the old wretched debt has been fully paid we can expect the peace of conscious honesty. It is after God's law has been fully kept and honored, and not till then, we can have peace with God the Law-giver. It is not till the sin-penalty death has been endured that the peace of perfect sinless life can follow for ever more.

All this the "Prince of Peace" has undertaken to see done. These are the only grounds and conditions on which Jesus Christ can be Prince of Peace. Peace—not by palliating the crime, or by painting and draping the rottenness, or by pious apologies for error, but by righting the wrong—by slaying the enmity—by curing the disease—by abolishing forever the curse, and killing out the death.

Such are the qualifications of the "Child born" the "Son given" *for government*. Is not this the very government for which all creation now groans?

Besides "*the government*"—i.e. the *universal* government of the Christ, this prophetic passage

IV. Distinctly predicts His local and central govern-

ment. "Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David and over his kingdom, to order it and establish it, with judgment and with justice, from henceforth even forever."

This prediction might be explained, expanded and confirmed by numerous others that could be quoted from Moses and the Psalms, from the prophets Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Daniel, from the minor prophets and from the plain statements of Jesus Christ, but time forbids. This prediction tells us—

(1.) That the Lord Christ's government on this earth shall be *personal*, and that His kingdom shall be a real, actual, visible, physical fact of human experience and mundane history. As surely as Victoria is reigning in England, Jesus Christ shall in Judea.

The great majority of our pious forefathers and very many of the excellent of the earth now believe that Gospel preaching and ordinances are the means designed by God for the gradual salvation and sanctification of the whole world, issuing in millennial peace—all denominations, even Baptist pastors and Ritualistic dignitaries most charitably embracing each other. Without dwelling on the fact that no such statements are found in the Bible, or on the plain statement that when the gospel of the kingdom has been preached in all the world to all nations for a *witness that then shall come the end*, what do we now actually see as the result of the Gospel? *Not* Christianity, merely christianized civilization—nations and cities brought from a condition of heathen barbarism (as in the case of the Pacific Islands and New Zealand) or of heathen civilization (as in the case of Rome and Calcutta &c.) into a condition of christianized civilization;

and this civilization has always two elements, viz., a small remnant of true regenerate children of God, a centre of light and salt surrounded by and almost buried beneath a vast mass of formality and refined vice. Paris, Marseilles, Florence, Naples and Rome are *Christian*, but where are the world and the flesh, selfishness and frivolity, superstition and vice more rampant? Berlin is eminently Protestant and Christian, with all its scientific atheism, its intense earthliness and godless militarism. Cincinnati, Chicago and San Francisco, with all their Sabbath desecration and unutterable social abominations are Christian — that is they are now in the state of christianized civilization. Can we say—can we even imagine that these are specimens of the Kingdom of Christ in progress? Of Christ's Kingdom asserting its supremacy over ancient heathenism, whether coarse and rude like that of Fiji, or refined and dignified like that of Athens, Rome, or Carthage? In God's sight, was the old sensual worship of heathenism more abominable than that lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and pride of life which fester under London refinements, which go dressed and jewelled to our theatres on Saturday, and to our sanctuaries on Sunday, which rise from the Lord's table and go away to the ball-room and the race-course, which hesitate not to gamble in stocks and wade through bankruptcy in the laudable effort of keeping up appearances and maintaining the social position of the girls at home! This is Christian civilization; but who dares to call it the Kingdom of Jesus Christ, either over the conscience or the outward life? It is vile sin—all the more exceeding sinful, because perpetrated under the guise of Christianity.

Something more, and something different is wanted

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than this proclamation of the Gospel, and the use of ordinances. Jesus Christ in person is needed in GOVERNMENT. The Gospel is an excellent means for gathering out of the nations God's elect and bearing "witness" to the world of the coming King.

(2.) The sphere of Christ's *personal* and *local* government shall be this earth, and its metropolitan seat Jerusalem. "Of the *increase* (*i.e.* the extension and spread of His government and peace,) there shall be no end"—from Jerusalem over all Africa, then Northward and Eastward and Westward. In these days we have been hearing not a little about the "Federation of England with her colonies" so that there may be created (by including a close international treaty with the United States,) a grand world-wide Empire of the English-speaking races, and thus secure permanent and universal peace. This is a grand Anglo-Saxon mythical vision; but ambitious, selfish human nature would not long be contented with such splendid cosmopolitan imperialism. This sentiment is only a confession of, and a longing for, something we want. *And here it is*—The Kingdom of Jesus Christ shall be far more than English-speaking: it shall be Polyglot—"All kindreds, and nations and tongues, and peoples" and "of its increase there shall be no end"—no boundary lines, no international territorial posts or limits shall define it, but "increase" and increase it shall until the one margin shall run into, and overlap the other. This is the blessed solution of the political and governmental problem of the ages.

Certainly one of the most interesting subjects of study at the present juncture of our world's history is *right government, i.e., government by which may be secured to*

the greatest number all the world over the greatest amount of blessing. Since the days of Nimrod perhaps every possible state form has been fairly tried and has failed. With the accumulated historical experience of long centuries and all nationalities, we are now trying by legislation to improve upon every known form and method. Results:—Russia tortured between her autocratic Czar and her Nihilists, and their doctrine of dynamite. Germany and her Parliament controlled by one great man. France recently revolutionized into a republic, and ready for something newer still—some *coup d'etat* still more brilliant any day. Old England seething politically like the witch's cauldron Macbeth saw; Conservatives vying with Liberals as to who shall pitch into the heaving hissing mass the largest concessions to the mob. America very much in the grasp of millionaires and rings of monopoly, of Rome and rum. Canada struggling to soothe her recent sorrows by giving the franchise to heathen Red Indians, and taking it from persons who believe in God, and can read and write. What need I say more? All human methods of human government seem to be hopelessly wrong. The very best are mere make-shifts—schemes to keep people from mobbing and devouring each other. Aristocracy is perhaps better than autocracy; but aristocracy is not *government*—it is only one favoured class manipulating all other classes for self. Modern Republicanism is perhaps sometimes better than aristocracy, and very often worse, but at best it is not *government*, but only the multitude, led and hoodwinked by rings, caucuses and demagogues, by secret societies and priests.

The longer I consider the subject it seems to me, *pop-*

ular government is barely possible and necessarily must be more or less a failure, and that for these obvious reasons :—People of moderate and ordinary education, with their heads full of business and family cares, and their limbs tired with hard work, with no means of proper political education but partizan newspapers and the fervid oratory of place-seekers, cannot possibly govern or vote wisely. Sufficient political intelligence can only be possessed by a small minority; and that minority cannot be trusted; and so the majority must rule, but the *majority* must ever be the most ignorant portion of the community. What are we to do? There appears to be but one reply:—One Supreme Ruler, perfect in wisdom and power, truth and honesty is alone sound government. This at least is *God's* ideal of right government; and this is just the government this precious prediction promises, viz:

1. Our world one great united Empire, under One Infallible Emperor; and Jerusalem the metropolitan city.

2. David's throne and dynasty restored. (Christ's present throne is not David's in any sense.) In this restoration of David's dynasty there is no difficulty. Jesus Christ is, all admit, the lineal descendent of David—Heir to his crown and sceptre.

When Jesus was born His pedigree was recorded and is a fixed historical fact. Since His resurrection He has lived these 19 centuries, and is to day in the full vigor of manhood. Contrasted with Jesus Christ's direct claim to the succession in the dynasty of David, consider the claim of any ancient royal line,—for example, the Roman Emperors were elective, and have all died

out. The Saxon and Norman monarchs of Britain have all died out. The Plantagenets, Tudors, ~~Stuarts~~ have died out. The legislative power of the English monarch has died out. The Bourbon and Napoleonic dynasties are practically defunct; and so on of all the rest.

Now, suppose the Lord Jesus were returning to earth and claiming David's ancient throne in Jerusalem, is there any one who would dispute His claim? I don't know if even the Mahommedans would. The Queen of England, the Emperors of Germany and Austria, the Czar of Russia and the King of Italy, the Presidents of America and of France certainly would not dispute His claim. The Pope of Rome himself, and the Patriarch of Moscow must lay their keys and honors at His feet. What else could those "Vicars" do in the presence of their divine principal? Jesus Christ was and still is "the Desire of all nations." Ps. lxxxix. 3, 4 comp. Luke i. 32, 33.

(3.) Jesus Christ's *method* of legislation will be perfect, and His *administration* irresistible. He is the "Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God."

(4.) His dominion shall be *permanent*—lasting as long as our world; for "of the increase—the extension and duration of His government and peace there shall be *no end*." "Once have I sworn in my holiness; I will not lie unto David, His seed shall be forever and his throne as the sun before me; it shall be established forever as the moon, and as the faithful witness in heaven." "I saw in the night visions One like unto a son of man came with clouds of heaven, and He came to the Ancient of days. * * * And there was given unto Him dominion and glory and a kingdom that all peoples, nations and

languages should serve Him: His dominion is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." Time fails me to repeat a moderate percentage of all the wonderful passages predictive of the earthly reign of Jesus Christ—how all nations shall obey His laws—how the potentates of the world will do Him honour and yield up to Him all their pretensions to authority—how He will dash His enemies, (royal, noble and plebian) in pieces like a potter's vessel—how, under His reign the wicked shall be made to lick the dust and the righteous to flourish and delight themselves in the abundance of peace.

(5.) His reign shall secure *universal peace*. "Of the increase of His *peace*," &c. At His first advent the angels sang, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth *peace*." This has never yet been realized. Peace of *heart* in individual cases has, peace of *conscience*, peace *with God*; but not "peace on earth." To-day the military and naval instrumentalities for destruction are more terribly effective than ever. The machinery of modern warfare is simply enormous, appalling, diabolic. Our pugnacious forefathers would stand in dumb astonishment at our monstrous inventions, such as guns of 101 tons, throwing balls of 2000 lbs. weight by a charge of 900 lbs. of powder!

But when it comes to pass in the last days, that "the mountain of the Lord's house" shall be established, and exalted, *then* men shall beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks, and people "shall learn war no more." Then *a* King (not several kings) but *a* King shall "reign in righteousness, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth."

And not upon mankind only shall this marvellous,

miraculous transformation be wrought, but upon the very brute creation the peace-reign of Christ shall work like a charm, for "the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones should lie down together, and the lion should eat straw like the ox."

"Cannot possibly be," cry all professional anatomists "Disposition, appetite, form of teeth, nature and construction of stomach—all are opposed to any such change of carnivorous animals into vegetarians."

I don't know about all such insuperable physical and gastronomic difficulties. If Jesus Christ comes down from heaven that will be a divine miracle. If he reigns over Jews and Gentiles—over Saxons, Celts and Teutons, Franks, Indians, Mongolians and Negroes, and if they all willingly submit, that surely will be a *divine miracle*! He who can accomplish all this cannot find the stomachs and teeth of animals a serious obstacle to His miraculous power. In this interesting matter we insist upon the miraculous. We appeal also to history.

King Nebuchadnezzar was reared on aristocratic diet, I venture to affirm, yet did not He take to grass, and thrive well on it for years? How were his teeth and stomach and royal tastes so suddenly adapted to coarse strong vegetables? *By miracle*. A bear, leopard, lion are surely quite as likely subjects of such gastronomic change as the Autocrat of Babylon.

When we are speaking of the things of God, we must get over this preposterous habit of setting scientific difficulties and natural facts in the way of Divine engage-

ment and Divine power. The God of nature and law is above natural habits and natural law. The entire scheme and work of Christ and Christianity are miraculous—from the birth of the Virgin's Babe on to the elevation of a Man to the throne of Deity, and onward further still to the seating of the Son of David on David's throne.

Without miracles there is no Christianity at all, and no remedy for our sin, misery and death. At our Lord's advent the rotting dead bodies of His saints shall be raised up from the silent grave bodies of purity and beauty, endowed with everlasting vitality. This we all believe. Now *this* is a work infinitely more wonderful than the transformation of animals I have referred to.

Coming nearer our own experience, can the Lord Jesus Christ by the power of His Word and His Spirit instantly change man's moral and spiritual nature, so that he now loves what he hated and hates what he once loved? My sister have you not experienced such spiritual regeneration? My brother, have not you? *That* was a miraculous transformation transcending far, any change that can be wrought upon animal nature, or upon national politics and methods of government. I believe the 11th chapter of Isaiah literally, and these 6th and 7th verses of this 9th chapter literally.

Indeed if we believe that the Incarnation, the Crucifixion, and the Resurrection of the Son of God were the *literal* fulfilment of ancient prophecy, we must also believe that this prophecy of His reign on earth can and shall be *literally* fulfilled.

THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST AS RELATED TO ISRAEL.

BY

REV. S. H. KELLOGG, D.D.

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The Second Coming of Christ

AS RELATED TO ISRAEL.

BY

REV. S. H. KELLOGG, D.D.

I HAVE been requested to read a paper on this occasion, upon the Second coming as related to Israel. By way of introduction, I may say that Israel, the seed of Abraham according to the flesh, is a *sign* of the Second Advent. By this it is meant that the history of Israel from the beginning until now, their condition as they live among us to-day, is such as to be a pledge and prophecy that the Lord Jesus Christ, the rejected Messiah of Israel, will verily come again in the very same literal manner as He came the first time in the flesh; in the same literal manner as in the flesh He left the earth, and ascended from Mt. Olivet to the right hand of God. And the argument lies in this way.

We open the Bible and we find that everything that has befallen Israel from the beginning until now has been predicted long before it happened, and everything that has been predicted concerning them while in their state of apostasy from God, has so far been fulfilled. If

they sinned, they were to be scattered among all nations. So they were. They were to suffer cruelly in their exile; so they have suffered; and so they are still suffering to-day. They were to become a "by-word and a hissing." So they are, in every land where they are found. They were to be greatly diminished in numbers; so they have been. Their holy land was to become a desolation, covered with thorns and briers, until the Spirit should be poured out on the nation. So it has been, and so it continues to-day. Their holy city, for the crime of their crucifixion of Messiah, was to be trodden down for a long time by the Gentiles; so it has been for eighteen hundred years, and so it is still.*

The point might be illustrated indefinitely, but this must suffice. Every prediction with regard to Israel from the beginning to the present time has so far, been fulfilled literally. This is the premise of our argument. The conclusion is this:—The predictions concerning Israel's Messiah and their relation to Him, must also be fulfilled, and fulfilled in the same way.

As regards the predictions of the Messiah's first coming, every Christian knows and admits that the law has held good. Not a prediction can be named, admitted by the universal consent of the church to refer to that first coming, but has been fulfilled literally. Messiah was to be born of a virgin. It seemed impossible; yet so it came to pass. He was to die, and yet to live forever; in appearance, again, impossible. Yet both have come true, for he died and rose again to everlasting life in resurrection. His hands and feet were to be pierced;

* For a full exhibition of the facts see the writer's work *The Jews, or Prediction and Fulfilment*. Price \$1.25.

so they were. They were to part His raiment among them, and for His vesture to cast lots; so they did. They were to smite the Judge of Israel upon the cheek; so they did. But there is no need of multiplying illustrations of facts so familiar. Like all the predictions touching Israel, so all the predictions concerning Israel's Messiah, so far as these relate to His first coming, have been fulfilled literally. But now turning to the prophets again, we find much about yet another coming of Israel's King,—prophecies which have never been fulfilled; and which stand in closest relation to a predicted restoration of Israel in the latter days. He who came to suffer, is to come to reign. So is the letter of the Word. Is not the Jewish nation, as it wanders about the world to-day, the brand of the predicted curse upon them, a continual and most solemn assurance that as in the past, so it shall be in the future? Must we not conclude that as all the predictions concerning Israel in the past and present, all those concerning the first advent of Israel's Messiah, have been fulfilled literally, so shall those which remain, concerning the coming of Messiah to reign, be fulfilled in like manner? I see not how any can escape the argument. As surely as Israel has been scattered, so surely shall they be converted and restored. As surely as their Messiah came once literally, so surely shall He come again literally. As it was predicted that He should do the work of a priest here on the earth in offering sacrifice for sin, and as He fulfilled these predictions literally when He offered Himself up for the sins of men; so since it is predicted that He shall also reign,—not somewhere far away in the heavens, but here on the earth on the throne of his father

David, why must not this be fulfilled in a manner just as literal as the rest? As the type of Aaron was fulfilled here on earth in literal, visible priesthood, so must the type of David also have a fulfilment here in a literal, visible manifestation of Christ as King. But in order to this, Jesus must "come again in the same manner as He was seen to go." Is any one in doubt whether these words will be fulfilled literally? I point him to the Jew. Behold in every Jew you meet, a walking, living and unanswerable proof that the prophecies are fulfilled with the most solemn literality and visibility. In all the long wail of ages which attests Israel's misery, as the nation groans under the fulfilled curse, can the ear of faith continually hear the solemn under-tone, *MARANATHA*, "The Lord cometh!" Strange, strange indeed that Christian men cannot all see this!!

Israel then is a living sign and reminder to us all that Israel's King is coming. And when He does come, then what shall be Israel's lot? As the first coming had so mighty a result for Israel, we might naturally suppose that the second coming of their King would no less closely be connected with their fortunes.

How shall it be? what is the predicted relation of the coming of the King to the nation. To this question we are now to attend.

Among evangelical Christians it is commonly agreed, that Jesus will some time or other literally come again into the world; and it is also agreed that we are to expect at some time, sooner or later, a restoration, in some sense, of the Jewish nation. All agree that in this restoration their conversion is certainly included; many deny—we believe mistakenly—that it shall also include a restora-

tion to the land. But this question does not affect the present argument. Many tell us, however, that the restoration of Israel shall take place long centuries before the coming of the Lord; will, in fact, introduce the expected "Millennium;" which age of universal righteousness must then run its long course before the Lord Jesus can rightly be expected. As opposed to this, we maintain that the Word of God, whenever it speaks of the two events, the restoration of Israel and the second appearing of the Lord Jesus, the Messiah, always represents them as in close chronological connexion. If not simultaneous, one is the immediate signal for the other. This we believe to be taught in the following Scriptures.

I. Isa. xxiv—xxvii. These chapters, as all agree, form a distinct section of the prophecies of Isaiah, a single prophecy, separate from what precedes and what follows, complete in itself. The subject of the prophecy is the restoration of Israel, the judgments and the blessings that shall accompany it. It is said to be the time when the children of Israel shall "be gathered one by one,"* when "Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit"†; when the Lord shall keep Israel as "a vineyard of red wine"; lest any hurt it, "will keep her night and day;" a blessing, which, according to the improved rendering of the revised version ‡, will be "the fruit of taking away of the sin of Jacob;" a blessing in consequence of which it is said that the song given in the 26th chapter "shall be sung *in the land of Judah*." Such in general is the prediction. Is there here any note as to the time when this restoration prophecy shall be ful-

* xxvii. 12. † xxvii. 6; ‡ xxvii. 9.

filled? in particular, as to the relation in time of this restoration to the second coming of Messiah?

In the first place, we find (xxvi. 19), "Thy dead men shall live; together with my dead body shall they arise. A wake and sing, ye that dwell in dust; for thy dew is as the dew of herbs; and the earth shall cast out the dead. Here is a clear prediction of the resurrection of the dead, placed in suggestively close connection with the prediction of Israel's restoration. It is added (xxvii. 1) that "in that day" when the restoration shall take place, "the Lord with his sore and great and strong sword shall punish leviathan, the swift serpent, and shall slay the dragon that is in the sea." With these words which may be compared the words in Rev. xx. where we are told that it is at the time of "the first resurrection" that the Lord will lay hold on the dragon, the old serpent, which is the devil and Satan, and bind him for a thousand years, and cast him into the abyss, that he may deceive the nations no more till the thousand years shall be fulfilled. If the similar language refers, as is natural to suppose, to the same event, then in fixing in this day of resurrection the punishment of leviathan, the serpent, the prophet again, and more definitely, fixes the restoration of Israel at the time, when—as we are told in the New Testament shall take place the first resurrection, and therefore at the second coming of our Lord.

Still, however probable it might seem, these indications alone might not be regarded as settling the question whether the advent of our Lord is to be expected in connection with the restoration of Israel. But the prophecy before us is yet more explicit. In the triumphant song of chap. xxv. verse 8, we are told that in the coming day when that song "shall be sung in

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the land of Judah," the Lord, will swallow up death in victory." But in 1. Cor. xv. 54, we are told in so many words by the apostle Paul, that the time when these words shall be fulfilled, is the time of the resurrection of the just. Nothing could be more explicit than his language. "When this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, *then* shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory." But the time when this mortal shall put on immortality, he had before said would be the day of the coming of the Lord Jesus. "They that are Christ's" shall rise, he tells us, "at his coming." In a word, then, we are expressly told that the time of that deliverance of Israel here predicted—the time when the triumphant psalm of chap. xxv. "shall be sung in the land of Judah,"—the time when the children of Israel "shall be gathered one by one," is the time when "death shall be swallowed up in victory." But according to the inspired interpretation of the apostle Paul, that time is the day when "they that are Christ's" shall be raised "at his coming." Surely this explicitly synchronizes the restoration of Israel with the resurrection of the just, and therefore with the second coming.

II. To the same effect is the testimony of Isaiah lix. 20, 21. Let it be observed that this, again, is a prophecy, the key to which is furnished us by an inspired interpretation. When we read, as we do here, of those "who turn from transgression in Jacob," we are not left at liberty to get rid of possible doctrinal consequences by saying that this is here to be understood of a spiritual Jacob or the spiritual Israel, as found in the New Testament

church. Paul, again, has settled the scope of this prophecy for us in Rom. x. where he teaches us in the most explicit language possible, quoting a part of this prophecy, that it refers to the future conversion of the fleshly national Israel.* Neither can any one say that the prophecy refers to the restoration from Babylon. For, in the first place, the prophet tells us with regard to the restoration of which he speaks, "As for them, this is my covenant with them saith the Lord, My spirit that is upon thee. . . shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, from henceforth and for ever."† That was not fulfilled in Israel restored from Babylon. And so, in perfect accord with these words, we find that Paul applies the words to a restoration of Israel which, when he wrote, was still future, and which it is needless to say has never yet been seen.

Now what is said here of this yet future restoration of Israel? Let us read vs. 15-20, as accurately rendered in the revised version.

"The Lord saw.. and it displeased him that there was no judgment. And he saw that there was no man, and he wondered that there was no intercessor; therefore his own arm brought salvation unto him, and his righteousness, it upheld him. And he put on righteousness as a breast-plate, and a helmet of salvation upon his head; and he put on garments of vengeance for clothing, and was clad with zeal as a cloke. According to their deeds, accordingly he will repay, fury to his adversaries, recompence to his enemies... So shall they fear the name of the Lord from the west, and his glory from

*Rom. xi. 26· comp. Dan. lix. 20. †Is. lix. 21.

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the rising of the sun. For he shall come as a rushing stream, which the breath of Jehovah driveth; and a Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob."

How could language be plainer? Here we are expressly told that at the time of Israel's final conversion, Israel's Redeemer shall come to Zion.

A *spiritual* coming, will any one say? Let it be remembered that we have already seen that at the same time, according to Isaiah and Paul, shall occur the resurrection of the just. If so, then the coming of Israel's Redeemer which shall take place at the same time cannot be spiritual, but must be that personal, visible return in glory by which, as all the apostles teach us, the resurrection will be ushered in.

III. If Isaiah's testimony still leaves any in doubt as to the close connection in time of the conversion of Israel with the second advent and the resurrection of the just, let us hear the word of another prophet. In Dan. xii. 1, 2, we have the following prediction. "At that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people; and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even till that same time; and at that time thy people shall be delivered, even every one that shall be written in the book." Here let it be observed, before proceeding to the next verse, that there is no question as to who Daniel's people were. Daniel's people were the Jews. Nor can there be any doubt as to what primarily is intended by the deliverance of which here we read. For this deliverance must have reference to the affliction and captivity of which we read so much in

the preceding chapters; an affliction consisting in the prolonged oppression of Daniel's people under the yoke of the Gentiles. Neither is it possible to refer this deliverance to the restoration from Babylon, or to the days of the relief of the Jews from the tyranny of Antiochus Epiphanes. For it is expressly said that the time of that restoration shall be a time of trouble, such as never there had been since there was a nation. But our Lord when on earth quoted these words, and referred their fulfilment to a time still future when he spoke. The words must then refer to a deliverance of Israel to take place at some time later than the first advent. But that there has never been any deliverance of Daniel's people since our Lord referred to these words is certain; there reference must therefore be to that great and final deliverance of Israel, which, in some form or other, the Church still expects. When then shall it be? Is there here any note of time? How plain the next words, which we render literally:—"And many from among the sleepers in the dust of the earth shall awake; these [shall be] to everlasting life; those [shall be] to shame and everlasting contempt."

Here we have an express statement, (1) that at the time of Israel's yet future deliverance from all her enemies, there shall be a resurrection of "many" who are sleeping in the dust of the earth; (2) that this resurrection shall not be universal, but partial; "many of the sleepers," not all; (3) that these who awake, shall be to everlasting life; (4) that those who—do not then thus awake,—shall be reserved to shame and everlasting contempt. Nor can any one say a spiritual resurrection is intended. So to interpret is to set usage at defiance. Never is the sleep of

souls dead in sin described as a sleeping "in the dust of the earth." The orthodox Jews have always understood a literal resurrection to be predicted here and according to uniform usage, we must hold that they have been right.

Thus, as in Isaiah, only yet more explicitly, we are again told, even in so many words, that there shall be a resurrection unto everlasting life at the time of the restoration of Israel. But, as before, so here again we must conclude,—if a resurrection takes place at the time of Israel's restoration, then the Lord's expected personal return must take place at that time; for of a resurrection without a return of the Lord, the Scripture knows nothing. They that are Christ's shall rise at his coming.

In confirmation of this understanding of the words, it is to be noticed that our Lord in Matthew xiii., in the exposition of the parable of the tares, plainly alludes to the words of Daniel which follow in vs. 3, where we read, "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever." So our Lord said that at the time of the harvest "the end of the age," the returning Son of man "shall send forth his angels, and gather the wheat into his garner; . . . and then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father."

IV. We find another passage bearing on this question in Zech. xii. xiii. xiv. In this prophecy we have first a prediction of the repentance and restoration of Israel. That it must refer to the future, is plain because the world has never seen any such universal repentance of Israel as is set forth in chap. xii. 10-14; neither has the Lord ever yet set his hand "to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem," as in chap. xii. 9; neither have we

ever seen the blessed results which are said to follow the fulfilment of this prophecy; when Holiness unto the Lord shall be written even upon the bells of the horses, as is written in chap. xiv. 20.

Now, concerning this future repentance of the Jews, we read, "I will pour upon the house of David and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first born."*

But if we turn to the New Testament we find that the apostle John quotes a part of this passage in the Apocalypse, giving a literal translation from the Hebrew, and in so many words refers it to the second advent of the Lord. For it is written (Rev. i. 7,) "Behold he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him and all kindreds of the earth;" *lit.* "all the tribes of the land shall wail because of Him." And in this he was but following the example of the Lord Jesus, who had also used words from the same prophecy referring their fulfilment in like manner to His future coming in the clouds of heaven as in Matt. xxiv. 30, and the parallel passages.

If we examine the latter part of this same prophecy of Zechariah, we shall find yet more explicit reference to the glorious personal advent of the Lord, in connection with that last terrible tribulation which shall usher in the final repentance and restoration of Israel of which he writes. For in chap. xiv. we read that "in that day,"

* Zech. xii. 10.

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namely, when all the tribes shall look on him whom they have pierced and mourn, and "a fountain shall be opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness," (chap. xiii. 1.) the day in which also the Lord "will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle," (chap. xiv. 2) in that day the feet of the Lord "shall stand upon the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east," and "the Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee." (chap. xiv. 4, 5.)

As to the meaning of this phraseology, be it observed first, that it is utterly impossible to refer this standing of the Lord "upon the Mount of Olives" to anything in the first advent of our Lord. At no time during the life of our Lord on earth, was there any such gathering of the nations against Jerusalem as is here described. To again, say that it refers to a providential coming of the Lord when Jerusalem was destroyed, is wholly inconsistent with the context, and that for two reasons.

In the first place, of the siege against Jerusalem which is predicted here, it is said v. 2, that "half of the city" shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city." This is no description of the massacre and captivity which attended the destruction of Jerusalem under Titus. Neither was the issue of that tribulation such as that which is here foretold as the issue of this. For it is here said that that great conflict shall end in the final and everlasting repopulation of the land. "Men shall dwell in it and there shall be no more utter destruction, but Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited" (chap. xiv. 11.) No providential coming of the Lord that history has ever seen, can be in-

tended here. The prophecy can be fitted to no past historical event except by the most extreme violence to its plainest statements. Neither can the language be applied, according to the usage of Scripture symbolism, to a coming of the Lord by his Spirit. Where in the Scripture symbolism is there anything which would warrant one in saying that the standing of the feet of the Lord "upon the Mount of Olives" denoted a revival of religion?

The words must then refer to the future. They do not relate to the conversion of Israel; that has been already predicted. They naturally and most obviously describe the personal presence of the Lord of Israel at the time and the precise spot mentioned in the parable,—the very place, it may be observed, whence Christ ascended. They must refer to the future, second appearing of Jesus.

This is made the more certain when we observe the words in vs. 5; "The Lord my God shall come and all the saints with thee!" If we should assume a spiritual or providential coming of the Lord to be here denoted, what can then be meant by the coming "*of all the saints*" with the Lord? What event in the past or what predicted for the future, which could be rightly described as a coming of the Lord with all his saints" except it be that future coming of our Lord in the glory of his kingdom when "all them that sleep in Jesus, God shall bring with him?" And if anything more be needed to settle the question, we have it in the fact that Paul in the New Testament quotes these very words, which according to Zechariah describe what is to occur at the time of Israel's conversion and deliverance, as describing the future return of the Lord for resurrection. For he

uses this language: "To the end that he may establish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints. (1 Thess. iii. 13.)

We sum up then the teaching of this prophecy of Zechariah as follows:—Zechariah in these chapters (xii-xiv,) predicts a yet future repentance of Israel and a future final deliverance of the Jews from all their enemies, in a day when a fountain shall be opened to them for sin and for uncleanness. And he tells us further that at that day they shall look upon him whom they pierced. Jesus and his apostle John both represent these words as fulfilled at the second coming of the Lord. Zechariah further tells us that in the day of Israel's salvation, the feet of the Lord "shall stand upon the mount of Olives, and the Lord my God shall come and all the saints with him." But Paul represents these words also as finding their fulfilment at the second coming of the Lord. We must conclude, as from the other scriptures cited, that Zechariah also represents the conversion and restoration of Israel as synchronizing with the second appearing of the Lord to judge and reign.

It has been rejoined that if this be the correct interpretation of the Old Testament prophecies, it is very strange that we do not find the same truth in the New Testament. To this we answer, first by asking whether then such objectors would wish us to understand that nothing can be held as certainly taught in the Old Testament, except it be also clearly affirmed in the New? Is the fourth commandment formally re-affirmed in the New Testament? No one, surely will dare to assert that we are to believe nothing which is not taught in

both Testaments; and yet except on this assumption what decisive force can there be in the objection? That there should not be, in any case, so much about the restoration of Israel in the New Testament as in the Old, is natural. For the New Testament was written, not specially, in the first instance, for the Jews, but for the churches of the Gentiles. But we deny that there is no reference in the New Testament to a restoration of the Jews in connection with the second advent of the Lord. This is plain indeed from the New Testament reference to the Old Testament prophecies already noticed. But there is more in the New Testament than these.

V. Let us look, in the first instance, at the words of our Lord in Luke xxi. 24 *et seq.* In that passage and context, the Lord predicts the destruction of Jerusalem and the accompanying calamities. He said that Jerusalem should be trodden down of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles should be fulfilled. Surely no man can say that this is the spiritual Jerusalem, the New Testament church,—the ready resource of interpreters in so many other places. For the prophecy has in large part passed into fulfilment, and has been fulfilled in the *literal* Jerusalem, in the land of Palestine. That city is trodden down of the Gentiles now, and has been ever since 70 A.D. But the words naturally imply that a time is coming when this state of things shall cease. Jesus did not say Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles *forever*. He distinctly fixes a limit to this condition of things. It shall be trodden down "till the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." Surely these words imply that a day is coming when Gentile rule in Jerusalem shall come to an

end, and Israel shall be reinstated there. Till that day, the long tribulation lasts on Israel, even as yet to-day. Then it will end. It is *till* that day. Israel's restoration is clearly assumed.

But is there anything here about the second advent? Let us look at Matthew's account of the same discourse. He tells us that our Lord said explicitly, that when that "tribulation," comprehending with all else this age-long treading down of Jerusalem by the Gentiles, shall cease, then, "*immediately* after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and powers of the heaven shall be shaken: and then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in Heaven; and then"—observe that he quotes the words used by Zechariah of the repentance of Israel—"then shall all the tribes of the earth (or of the land), mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of Heaven with power and great glory." Matt. xxiv How could language be plainer? "*Immediately* after" the tribulation of Israel ends; when Jerusalem shall, cease to be trodden of the Gentiles, and Israel shall in some degree be established in their own land; immediately thereafter shall appear the awful signs which shall be swiftly followed by the appearing of the Son of Man in the clouds of heaven! Is not this a re-affirmation of that which we have already seen to be the teaching of the Old Testament Scriptures? and that by the authority of our Lord himself? Surely He places together the restoration of Israel and His second coming.

VI. Nor is this the only passage where we may perceive a reference to the same truth. For it is written that just

before his death, when taking solemn leave of the apostate nation, He closed an awful series of woes in these words: "Ye shall not see me henceforth till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." Surely in the light of all the Scriptures to which we have attended, the natural inference from these words is this; that while He would be withdrawn from their bodily vision during the whole period, however long, in which they should continue as a nation to reject them, yet when they should cease to reject Him—when they should say, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord," instead of being ready to crucify Him, then they should see Him again.

VII. That the personal return of the Lord is conditioned by Israel's repentance, is also directly taught by the apostle Peter in Acts iii. 19-21, where according to the accurate rendering of the revised version, we read that Peter said unto the Jews to whom he was preaching:—"Repent ye and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out, that so there may come seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, and that He may send the Christ who hath been appointed for you, even Jesus; whom the heavens must receive until the times of restoration of all things, whereof God spake by the mouth of His holy prophets, which have been since the world began." Here in plain language Peter teaches the Jews, as a motive to lead them to repentance, that if they will repent, God will send the Christ, even Jesus, whom the heavens must receive until those times of predicted restoration. What could be plainer? Even Prof. Addison Alexander, has been compelled to admit in his commentary on this passage, that if we are to allow the

usage of language to determine the meaning of words, then we must admit that Peter here is speaking of a personal advent of the Lord, and not of any providential or spiritual coming whatever. In the light of such passages can we reasonably doubt what Paul had in mind, when in Rom. xi. 26, 27, writing of the restoration of the Jews, or—more precisely—their conversion, he quotes with a slight variation in confirmation of his teaching, the word of the prophet Isaiah to which we have already attended, to the effect that it is when “the Redeemer shall come out of Zion” that ungodliness shall be turned away from Jacob.

We conclude then, that there is abundant evidence that the Scriptures of the Old and the New Testament agree in representing the future restoration and conversion of Israel as accompanied by or taking place in closest connection with the glorious return of the Lord Jesus to judge and reign. When Israel returns, then, we are assured death shall be swallowed up in victory; Christ’s dead men shall live; together with his dead body shall they rise. When Israel repents, the Redeemer shall come to Zion and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob. In the day of Israel’s final cleansing the Lord our God shall come, and all the saints with Him, and His feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives, and Israel “shall look upon Him whom they have pierced and shall mourn for Him....as one that is in bitterness for his first-born.” To the same effect the Lord Jesus teaches that when Israel’s long tribulation shall end, Jerusalem shall cease to be trodden down by the Gentiles; and immediately thereafter shall be introduced the scenes which herald the coming of the Son of Man

in the clouds of heaven to judgment, and to reward His people. How natural is it that Peter, with full recognition of the mighty blessings—both to Israel as a nation, and to the church,—which according to these Scriptures, stand connected with the restoration and repentance of Israel, should urge his nation to repent and turn, that so might come the promised times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, and that God might send the Christ which had been appointed for them, even Jesus! And according to this inspired teaching with how much reason could Paul say concerning Israel (Rom. xi. 15); “If the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be but life from the dead?” To all which our hearts respond, Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!



THE POWER OF THIS TRUTH TO ENCOURAGE
AND STIMULATE THE CHURCH

IN AND TO
THE WORK OF EVANGELIZATION.

BY THE
BISHOP OF HURON, (MAURICE BALDWIN, D.D.)

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MY Christian friends, I have been asked to speak on the subject of the bearing of the Doctrine of Christ's pre-millennial coming on the subject of Missions, and I may add, of our daily Christian life. There are many indications, no doubt, of the speedy coming of our Lord and master Jesus Christ, but among the most tangible is this, the awakening interest in the cause of missions. Wherever we see members of the Church of Christ we see awakening interest in the great work of missionary labor. Not a hundred years ago there was the utmost apathy and indifference everywhere upon the subject; and many of you are aware of the reception which Carey met with when he preached to the people on his going to India to proclaim the gospel of the grace of God. The subject was met with ridicule, sarcasm, and scorn. It was derided on every hand. But where, I ask, to-day

is there any representative of the Church of Christ who will stand up in a public assembly to ridicule the great work of missions? Such an one could not be found. There has been a most tremendous growth upon the subject, and the fact of this great growth is one indication, at least to my mind, of the speedy coming of our Lord:

Let us observe the following facts. Our Lord tells us in the 24th of Matthew, that His gospel was "to be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come." It seems to me clear and definite that the instruction given to us in this passage is, that our Lord intends that His gospel is to be preached in every land for *a witness*.

Now a hundred and fifty years ago people might have folded their arms and said that that idea of Christ's coming was, to say the least, intensely remote. And what was the state of the whole Church at that time? There was great laxity and indifference. And I can say just as a member of the Church of England that the growth of that church has been in direct ratio to her advancement of the cause of Missions, and I will further say that never was there a time of deeper spiritual life—never was there a time of intenser earnestness than there is to-day, and if we ask what reason may be assigned for this, it is that there has been this increased blessing in the work of advancing the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Great Missionary Societies have arisen. They are constantly developing and expanding in their work, so that to-day there is scarcely to be found a nation not willing to a greater or less extent, to receive the heralds of the cross. The world is to-day interpenetrated by Missions. India, from

the mountains of Himalaya to the Cape of Comorinis receiving the word of truth, and away into Tartary and Thibet, the Lord Jesus is sending out His messengers, glad precursors of that blessed morning when He shall come to take His Bride to be with Himself; to be forever with him in His presence.

I would state in the next place, that our Lord is further preparing for His advent by stirring up His people so that they have learned this truth, that whilst the whole work must be advanced,—whilst the millions which lie about their own doors must be seen to, yet there is the paramount duty which we cannot divest ourselves of, to spread the gospel “till like a sea of glory it spreads from pole to pole.” We see, however, that in this dispensation there are limitations. Christ says (using a Greek word,) “this gospel must be preached for a witness.” He does not say till every nation is converted. He does not say until every person is brought into direct and positive subjection to His perfect sway. He tells us that it is for a witness, and we are told distinctly that His coming is to gather out from the nations His *ecclesia*. That gathering is going on to-day.

The subject before me is the power of this truth to encourage and stimulate the church in and to the work of evangelization, and I therefore pass on, to state in the next place, that there has often been brought to my mind the objection that so little is apparently done. The enemies of Missions have risen and said, Where are the results which we might have anticipated? Where are the nations born in a day? Where are the unconverted millions that are bowing down at His feet to worship and serve Him? In answer I would state, the Lord’s pur-

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poses unfold slowly but surely, and we look forward through the darkness to the brighter morning before us. There was an able paper read this morning upon the Second Coming of Christ as related to Israel, and I might first add that, amongst the many blessings which are in future store for the world, is this restoration, the conversion of the ancient people of Israel. It is just one of those grand majestic steps, the height, and the depth, the length and the breadth of which our finite minds have not yet fully grasped. Sufficient however to say, that the subject was just touched upon, and may be developed this afternoon concerning the effects which flow from the restoration of God's ancient people.

The apostle says, "If their rejection be the reconciling of the world, what shall their acceptance be but life from the dead?" Now does that mean something absolutely figurative. Is it to be related to the domain of metaphor? I do not think so. We find that the rejection of Israel was the preaching of the gospel to us Gentiles. The apostle said "since you count yourselves unworthy of eternal life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles." Well now we Gentiles have been receiving the gospel for so many hundred years, I may say that we have not been as faithful as we should have been, and the apostle distinctly states that there was the fear lest, if God spared not the natural branches, He would not spare the wild olive tree. But we learn from Scripture that there is an end of the church of the first born, that it, the church of the first born, is to be caught up to meet the Lord in the air, and that in this blessed millennial glory which is to follow, Israel is to take its place as the great and mighty priestly nation, for the advancing of the gospel of God's eternal love,

Now I draw your attention to the fact there is a line of prophecies concerning Israel which, under no mode of interpretation, can be claimed to have been already fulfilled. Take the wondrous prophecy concerning Israel commencing with the 60th chapter of Isaiah. No one can say that this has ever as yet met with its fulfilment. In the 10th verse: "And the sons of strangers shall build up thy walls, and their kings shall minister unto them; for in my wrath I smote thee, but in my favor have I had mercy on thee." 12th verse: "For the nation and the kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish, yea those nations shall be utterly wasted." There are so many besides these that might be quoted, that I would consume too much of your time were I to read them. I may say, however, that they point to the time when Jerusalem shall be the moral centre of the earth. It shall be neither London, or Paris, or New York, but the kingly glory—the centre of God's mighty operations, shall be the Holy City, and Israel being restored and converted shall become the great nation to extend the Gospel throughout all quarters of the earth. In the 20th chapter of the same prophet, and at the 26th verse, this sublime language is used "Moreover the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days, in the day that the Lord bindeth up the breach of His people, and healeth the stroke of their wound." The church of the first born having been removed to be at the side of the Heavenly Bridegroom, the millennial glory shall be the great time of missions. It will be the time when the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun. It will be the time when nations

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shall be born in a day. It will be the time when Israel's people shall be righteous, and men shall know them as the ministers of God.

Let us note in the next place, that therefore we are to pray that the Lord will speedily come. Then at His coming, living waters shall flow out of Jerusalem for the healing of the people. Therefore it is our duty, our blessed glorious privilege, to know that Christ is coming, and to cry continually, "Come Lord Jesus, come quickly," to thy waiting, waiting church.

Now these truths must have the greatest power upon our Christian life. They are doctrines which must affect us. As some people hold that there is no personal coming, it seems to me to take away the brightest sight that the eye can rest upon. A pleasant thing it is for the eye to see the light, but a pleasanter thing for the soul to look upon Jesus Christ, and to know that our dear Lord is coming, coming soon to take His Bride to be forever with Him; and therefore if we believe that Christ is coming, and if, in the second place, we believe that coming to be contingent upon the diffusion of the gospel of Jesus Christ, does it not follow, as a necessary consequence, that those who are permeated with such views will want to do everything that lies in their power to advance the cause of missions? It is His cause, not ours. We see Christ in struggling missions, we see His glory in the feeblest of them. There is a mistaken idea in this world about what are the *great* movements. People suppose that when great nations sign declarations of war against other nations that these are the great events, but as I look at it the great events of life are the going forth of groups of missionaries

with the Gospel in their hands, to proclaim God's love to dying men. *The* great event waits the work of these men. This Gospel must be preached to every nation, and then shall the end come. Then in view of this ought we not—and this seems as practical as the other—to be more ready than we are to lay down our silver and our gold—to consecrate our means to the blessed cause of Jesus Christ, that this work may be accomplished and that the Bride may soon look up and say, "Behold he cometh leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills."

The next point I have to speak about is, that in considering the subject of our Lord's coming and its bearing on Missions, we cannot but notice that the whole subject of revelation is only now being slowly examined into. I do not underrate the labors of earnest men in the past. I am only speaking of the general facts in the case. The book of the Revelation has been practically sealed. Now I do not wonder at the fact. Let us understand that the Scripture clearly points out that Satan is the god of this world. It indicates that Satan has had a great deal to do upon the earth. He caused the failure of our first parents, and this book is the book which tells his doom. It shows him bound, and cast into the lake of fire. It shows us the fulfilment of the statement of the dear Lord, "I saw Satan as lightning fall from heaven." It shows us his final end, the holy foot of Jesus Christ upon the neck of our great foe, and his being hurled into that bottomless pit, from which he is never to rise. Is it likely that he would promote the study of the book of Revelation? No, it is not likely. It is more likely that he would induce people to consider

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that it is so dark, so mysterious, so utterly incomprehensible, that the safest, the wisest and the most judicious course was to leave it absolutely unread ; but at the very threshold of the book lies the statement, " Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein, for the time is at hand,"

Now if we go to the study of the book of Revelation, we find that it is just that which the grace of God indicates we should do. In the Epistle of Paul to Titus there are three effects noted of the grace of God. One is that it teaches us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts ; secondly, that we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world. The one is the negative, the other the positive, and the third is that we should "look for that blessed hope, the glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ." I would say that these three effects ought to be kept together, the negative, denying ungodliness ; the positive, living soberly ; and thirdly, looking for the blessed coming. Thus we live in hope, however bright the day may be, and however joyous we may be if we are looking for His coming, it makes the day go swifter. The thought that in a moment we may stand face to face with Him, how it helps us to bear the sorrows of this troubled life. To stand amidst the duties of every day and look through the dark and thickening air, and feel that the coming of the Lord draweth swiftly nigh. It is the grace of God within the heart that makes us look up from things temporal to things eternal.

Now the next point is, the statement of the apostle Paul as to our present position. His language is very

remarkable. He says that our commonwealth is where Christ is. If we turn to the Epistle to the Philippians 3rd chapter, 20th verse, we find the apostle stating—as it is in the old version—“our *conversation* is in heaven.” Now that word means more than that; it is our *commonwealth*, our state is in heaven. We are to live there; that is, we do not live there as regards the body. We do not live there as regards things temporal, but the apostle, in his epistle to the Ephesians, tells us that this is our commonwealth, that place where Christ is, and from which we expect our Lord to issue; we are to live there. And I would say, how much more nobly would we walk and live if we realized more the pilgrim character of those that are expecting the coming Christ. The sandals then would always be upon our feet, and the staff would ever be in our hands, and our faces would be towards the city of the great King. We would use the things of this world as not abusing them. We would fill the time of our sojourn with happy, joyous service, seeking to improve each moment that we might advance the glory of our blessed God.

Another point that I would draw your attention to, is a very remarkable one concerning this subject. That just in proportion as we expect our Lord's coming, and look for that coming, do we grow in divine life. In the 3rd chapter of the 2nd epistle to the Corinthians, 18th verse, the Apostle says, “We all with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the spirit of the Lord.” Now I gather that however difficult this passage may be, and however many interpretations may have been given as to its proper meaning, that it simply

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teaches us that the view of Christ transfigures us. That just as a man going into the state where people are below him, and inferior to him in education, inferior to him in life, and he to go among them and adopt their modes of living and expression, loses his high position by going down to them—he sinks, whereas if we look at Christ, the apostle says, gazing at Him, setting the Lord always before us, from sunrise to sunset, we are changed into His image from glory to glory. There is elevating power in the study of the coming of the Lord. None of us deny for one moment that people have taken up unscriptural ground on the subject. That people have run into wild excess, and have brought the subject in the eyes of many into discredit, but the truth is here. It is before us, and just as we keep Christ before us, and His coming glory do we, ourselves, become changed into the likeness of His image, so that if He tarries, and we have fallen asleep, we shall awake satisfied with His likeness. We shall see Him when this corruptible shall have been exchanged for the incorruptible, and this mortal shall be changed into the immortal, and we know not what we shall be, but we know that when He shall appear we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.

Again, I might speak too of the comfort of this doctrine. We are sometimes called to comfort those who mourn, and I think that so often whilst people comfort the mourner with whatever doctrine they have at their command, they fail to see the mode in which the apostle Paul would comfort those that weep the loss of friends. So ten people get no further than the language of David when he said, the child could not come to him, but he could go to the child. True, but we go to the

house of mourning with the apostle and say, at least we try to say, that there is strong consolation, that that body which represents the home of a sleeping saint is just laid—perchance for a little while to rest there—perhaps only a day, a week, a month, a year, and then Christ shall come and the dead in Christ shall rise first. We point them to the fact that the believer's falling asleep is, as it were, momentary; that that body is precious to God. That it has been redeemed as well as the soul. That the Lord knows its resting place, and that He shall call it forth again, purified, beautified, and made meet for the eternal home. "Comfort one another with these words." Tell them that the night is far spent, and that the day is at hand. In the day of mourning people are told to bear their sorrows, and it is most proper and most true; but there is this further to be said, that while we do bear our sorrow, and whilst we mourn, it is not of those who have no hope; that we know it is only for a little while. If I am called to go to the bedside, and afterwards to follow to the grave, one who has sunk without hope, what can I say? I say, I know he shall rise but I know not when; the Lord knoweth. There is a darkness and a gloom, but that darkness and that gloom does not rest on the believer's hope—it is bright. It is "the Lord shall come again."

Two other points, and I conclude. First, the apostle says there is a crown for those that love His appearing. In the Second Epistle to Timothy, 4th chapter and 8th verse we read: "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous Judge shall give me at that day, and not to me only but unto all them also that love His appearing." Have you

ever thought that that crown is for all who love His appearing? It is for those who are looking for it. The Greek verb signifies the waiting for His coming. That crown is not spoken of as being given to those who have achieved great results. Not even to those that even the church have thought the most worthy, but to those who love His appearing. To those who through good and evil report have waited, and with the cry, "Come Lord Jesus, come quickly."

The next thought is with reference to the gifts. In 1st Corinthians 1st chapter and 7th verse is the remarkable statement. The apostle says, that they, the Corinthians, come behind in no gift, waiting for the coming of the "Lord Jesus Christ." In other words, that just as they waited they were endowed with the various gifts of the Holy Ghost. Now just as the gospel of Christ is proclaimed with the Holy Ghost is with power, and the men who, anterior to Christ's first advent, proclaimed that Christ would come were men of power. They were the great and mighty of Israel—the men who like Isaiah and Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, and the minor prophets lifted up their voices, and said that Messiah cometh. They were men of power having the gifts of the Holy Ghost. Now then we come to our day, and I gather that the apostle's teaching is this: that the men who to day proclaim the second advent shall have the especial *charisma* which belong to the Church of Christ. That in other words, the Holy Ghost will endow with special powers those that boldly, fearlessly and emphatically make known the hope of the church, in the speedy coming of Christ.

Those true servants in Corinth came behind in no

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gift. I might expatiate on the subject, but I will only say that these gifts of the Holy Ghost were to dwell in the Church, and just as this truth of the Second Advent is brought forward the servant of Christ may expect power.

In conclusion, there are several subjects on which I might speak, but I will conclude with the following. If the cause of missions be brought before us, let us cease from looking at the subject from the human stand point and rather identify the cause wholly with the personal, living Christ. Second. Let us bear in mind the words of Christ, "Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he may send forth more laborers into the vineyard." I do think that each day we should pray for the cause of missions; we should pray that the faith of those in the work may be stronger, that mightier success may be given them; and let us ever remember that on their success is dependent the coming of our risen and exalted Lord. Let us, therefore, live very near to our Divine Master in abiding, holy, blessed union, for "he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit." Christ in me bringeth forth much fruit, and the whole effect of this blessed doctrine is to bring us into closer personal union with Jesus Christ. It is that we may die and He live. Oh that we shall learn more and more the power of our daily death, and His daily life.

In the next place, it will lead us to be more earnest in the reclamation of those that have wandered away. It will make us more in earnest in trying to win the lost and erring souls to the Lord Jesus, it will make us preach with more fervour, more earnestness the gospel of love to sinners. It will make us feel as Frances Ridley

Havergal said she felt, that sainted woman who fell asleep so recently, "I try to see my Lord in every person I meet, and I try to minister to every one, that I may minister in every one to my Lord and Master Jesus Christ."

And, dear fellow Christians, let this Lord dwell richly in you. Let Him be the Alpha and He the Omega. Let Him come with many crowns upon His head into your heart, and let Him sit upon the throne, and you lie low at His feet. Let Him speak, and do you obey, and just as you dwell in this attitude you will find His yoke is easy and His burden is light, and you will get faith each day to hasten His blessed coming.



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